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**Beauty and Consensus:
Practices for Agreeing on the Quality of the Service
in Client-Professional Interactions**

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**Beauty and Consensus:
Practices for Agreeing on the Quality of the Service
in Client-Professional Interactions**

by

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**Beauty and Consensus:
Practices for Agreeing on the Quality of the Service
in Client-Professional Interactions**

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Supervisor: Jürgen K. Streeck

This dissertation is a microanalytic investigation of professional communication in beauty salons in the United States and Japan. In particular, it centers on the analysis of a common, yet very important occurrence found in cosmetology sessions: what I call the “service-assessment sequence”, in which service-provider and client determine whether or not the completed work in a given session is adequate. This is a crucial moment in the haircutting activity (and in other fields of the service industry) in order to bring a satisfactory closure to the session, as well as maintain a healthy relationship for future sessions, retain clients in general, and ensure client satisfaction overall.

Using the methodological frameworks of microethnography and conversation analysis, I examine the moment-by-moment unfolding of interaction, focusing on how participants smoothly conduct the service-assessment sequence and how they achieve the successful completion of a service encounter through a number of tactics. The findings include: the participants’ systematic coordination of talk and physical inspection through

multiple second pair parts; the participants' coordination of talk and action to negotiate sequence closure; the participants' professional use of head nods in the middle of physical inspection and at sequence completion during service encounters in Japan; and the participants' employment of a unique combination of verbal and embodied actions to transform the event of revision into a mutual decision.

These findings suggest several important aspects of professionalization in beauty salons. Notably, the professionals' ability to harmonize talk and action is a special trait. Also, despite the fundamental regularities, the service-assessment sequence is frequently adapted to specific circumstances of each beauty salon that may vary across different services and cultures. Finally, the production of professional assessments and agreements are achieved by the participants' constant work on dramatization through the use of various communicative resources. The study is applicable not only to the field of cosmetology, but to a range of professional-client interactions where people evaluate the quality of service with their subjective perspectives, enhancing our understanding of negotiation-in-interaction in the workplace and what it means to professionalize communication in such situations.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.0 FOCUS OF THE STUDY

This dissertation represents a microanalytic investigation of professional communication in beauty/hair salons in the U.S. and Japan. In particular, it centers on an analysis of a common, yet very important occurrence found in cosmetology sessions: what I call the “service-assessment sequence”, in which service-provider and client determine whether or not the completed work in a given session is adequate, using mirrors to inspect the new cut. Normally taking place near the end of a service encounter, the service-assessment sequence could be as quick as 30 seconds, or longer than 5 minutes. Through this sequence, service-provider and client aim to come to a consensus about the service provided (e.g., the quality of a new haircut). Thus, it is a crucial moment in the haircutting activity (and in other fields of the cosmetological service industry) in order to bring a satisfactory closure to the session, as well as maintain a healthy relationship for future sessions, retain clients in general, and ensure client satisfaction overall.

By analyzing this particular sequence, this study aims to offer a better understanding of professionalization of communication in working relationships. In order to collect examples, I videotaped 30 haircutting sessions in the U.S., and 30 sessions in Japan. I adopt conversation analysis (CA) and microethnography to analyze various communicative devices and practices that co-participants employ and attend to for evaluating and negotiating the quality of service, and overall, to bring about a satisfactory closure of the service-encounter. My research of this particular sequence is guided by five central questions: 1) as service-provider and client negotiate the service-assessment sequence, what communicative devices and practices are employed and how are they

attended to by recipients; 2) how do service-provider and client coordinate talk and physical inspection of a service outcome; 3) how do co-participants come to consensus on the quality of the service and thereby achieve satisfactory closure of the service encounter; 4) what are the cross-cultural similarities and dissimilarities in professionalization of communication (if any); and 5) what do microanalytic observations of the service-assessment sequence tell us about the role of communication in professionalism and professionalization?

The detailed and accurate descriptions of a number of service-assessment sequences will lead to understanding other beauty-related professional contexts in which participants negotiate the quality of service, such as cosmetic (or other aesthetical) surgery, visual design (such as seen in industrial, architectural or graphic design), and other beauty service-related industries (nail/manicure, tattoo/piercing, modeling/photography). However, the goals of my study are not limited to the exploration of professionalization of communication among beauty-related industries. In addition to the discourse in the field of cosmetology, I also attempt to contribute to the enrichment of the study of organizational communication, especially by enhancing a general understanding of negotiation-in-interaction in the workplace and what it means to professionalize communication in such situations. The present study also contributes to the field of language and social interaction and multimodality. What we consider “professional communication skills” and “professional interactions” are not givens, but are actively practiced by people through micro actions. Microanalytic research of professional communication pursues professionalism as an interactional and local production and reproduction, as seen in the principle of Conversation Analysis, “the *interactional accomplishment of particular social activities*” (Drew & Heritage, 1992, p. 17). With the microanalysis of the service-assessment sequence, I discuss how these

accomplishments are made and how the context of professional communication is actually shaped and sustained through the participants' micro actions.

But why beauty salons, and why the service-assessment sequence? I would like to begin by sharing my personal and academic motivation for the present study. I then provide a brief overview of microanalysis and present additional details on the significance of this study.

1.1 MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY

Hair can speak a great deal about a person's individual character, and can also have a tremendous impact on one's self esteem. Because of this, clients can be very critical of stylists, and vice versa. At 18 (and when I first came to the U.S.), I became more conscious of the importance of skilled beauty service-providers in shaping (and re-shaping) individual identities among myself and my friends; some of which were also international students. I often heard complaints of American stylists that varied from frustration and bewilderment, to comments that "they do not know how to cut hair", "overuse electric clippers," and "were in the dark ages of natural skill and service to the customer." Good and bad, I have experienced many "professional" haircuts since my mother first took me along with her to the hairdresser. Throughout my life, there were many factors that encouraged me to go back to the same salons, such as: the friendliness of the stylists and employees, additional services (e.g., free drinks or massages), ambiance, geographical convenience, and so on. However, no matter how great all of those factors were, I would not go back if the outcome that I'd bring home with me – a new hairstyle – was unsatisfactory. Were my unsatisfactory haircuts the result of a lack of skill and knowledge on the stylists' part, or something else?

Approximately four years after arriving in the United States, I began to study social interaction. As I became more aware of various communicative strategies that people use to smoothly conduct their everyday and institutional interactions, I also started noticing communicative features of my interaction with hairstylists, which might have influenced the quality of the final outcome. For example, I sometimes would want to disagree with a stylist's advice, but then would end up agreeing with it because, after all, s/he is the expert. Other times, I would come home with an appalling haircut, because I gave my consent to something that the stylist had asked me, without really clarifying, or understanding it. Those mistakes are simple enough to understand, but I then started paying closer attention to my friends' comments on the services they received at beauty salons as well, and heard comments such as: "That stylist was so good, she was so professional!" "I really don't like this, he never explained what a #1 cut was." "I wish they used brighter colors." "I told her 'half an inch', and she cut an inch!" But in the end, is the customer always right?

Whether we are vocal about it to others or not, we tend to credit the quality of the service (i.e., good/bad haircut) to the stylists' practical skills alone. We also talk about how un/friendly the stylist is, and how un/easy it can be to talk to him/her. Yet, becoming a student of language and social interaction has enabled me to question a number of things. How do we envision a new haircut? What do clients do when they don't want to agree with their stylists and how does that influence the quality of the service? *How* do they come to a consensus in regards to the outcome of the service?

The use of interviews or surveys did not appeal to me as a method of study. Based upon what we, as customers, say to each other about services provided, these after-the-fact comments do not tell us *how* or even why participants come to such conclusions. By carefully looking at naturally-occurring interactions and the participants' moment-by-

moment coordination of actions, we can better understand exactly what participants are doing in the process of creating satisfactory closure of a styling session, and in turn the accomplishment of providing “quality” service, or the perception of a valuable, professional service delivery for the client. I will now briefly introduce the importance of microanalysis.

1.2 MICROANALYTIC INVESTIGATION OF THE SERVICE-ASSESSMENT SEQUENCE

This study seeks to describe what it means to professionalize communication in beauty-related workplaces through the analysis of the service-assessment sequence. For the purpose of my study, I analyze “naturally occurring talk-in-interaction” (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998; Ten Have, 1999), drawing from the traditions of both CA and microethnography. The details of these methodologies will be provided in Chapter 3, therefore I will first present a concise overview of what microanalysis can do, and how a micro-look at a sequence helps us to understand the bigger picture of professional communication, and even the nature of human interaction.

While CA and microethnography may be distinguished from each other in terms of focus and motivation (e.g., CA collects sequences to find an interactional pattern, and microethnographers examine particular settings and activities, such as classroom events), they were both influenced by ethnomethodology (Garfinkel, 1967), which emphasizes “the local, moment-by-moment determination of meaning in social contexts” (Heritage, 1984, p. 2) and studies “the body of common-sense knowledge and the range of procedures and considerations by means of which the ordinary members of society make sense of, find their way about in, and act on the circumstances in which they find themselves” (Heritage, p. 4). Accordingly, CA and microethnography share fundamental approaches to the analysis of social interaction, for example: micro observations of

recorded, naturally-occurring interaction. The present study looks at a number of service-assessment sequences, of which I have transcribed both talk and bodily movements in detail. Through the process of transcribing and analyzing – as I repeatedly watched the same sequences – I noticed a number of subtle (yet very strategic) verbal and embodied actions performed by stylists and clients. As Streeck and Jordan (Streeck & Jordan, 2009, forthcoming) argue, it is through these micro-actions (e.g., a customer's head movement, a stylist's 0.7 seconds of silence, a customer's gaze shift, and so on) that the multiple levels of context (e.g., an initial, single haircutting visit, a long-term relationship between a customer and a stylist, and even a history of hairstyle as a representation of individual's identity) are sustained. To borrow their words, "[t]he dynamics of the overall interaction therefore, is never 'about' just one level of context... rather, it is simultaneously 'about' all of the scales of embodied context the participants bring to bear during the interaction" (Streeck and Jordan, 2009, p. 18). Hence, a micro-look at the service-assessment sequence has – expectedly and unexpectedly – led me join multiple discourses in the field of, but not limited to, Communication Studies. I will now describe the several layers of context that the significance of this study is drawn upon.

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

A micro-look at the service-assessment sequence has revealed a number of layers of significance of this study. First and foremost, the study describes various ways in which the participants *actively* practice professionalism in the event of evaluating the quality of a service and suggests new perspectives toward professionalization of communication. As previous works suggest, the professionalization of communication in beauty salons may be seen in the way that a stylist skillfully speaks about hair and the way s/he indulges a customer with knowledge and assistance, which will be further

discussed in Chapter 2. This study, however, reveals several *other* communication skills of *both* the stylist and the client that are vital for a satisfactory closure of the service-assessment sequence, thus, the whole haircutting experience, and possibly many other service-encounters found in institutional settings.

To elaborate, the main and ultimate goal of the service-assessment sequence is achieving a consensus among the participants, whether it be that the service quality is good enough, or if it needs a revision. In fact, all sessions collected for this study ended with an agreement between stylist and customer, regardless of the varying lengths of time documented in the collected service-assessment sequences. Yet, in arriving at a consensus, participants go through several tasks. The negotiation of professional identities and power is one issue. In beauty-related industries, pampering is one of the most important (and desired) elements in measuring the quality of the service, and understandably, service-providers are required to care about both the body and mind of their customers. However, they are also experts of beauty work, often expected and obliged to share their *professional* knowledge. In some instances, conflict arises when stylists attempt to perform an act of pampering while demonstrating his/her own expertise, especially during the service-assessment sequence where the client and the stylist share their opinions about the quality of the service.

On top of that, we have a general bias toward agreement and alignment in interaction (Davidson, 1984; Pomerantz, 1984; Sacks, 1987; Lerner, 1996). Studies have shown that, in addition to non-institutional everyday interactions, people at work also heavily orient to the preference organization for agreement and alignment despite the institutional characteristics, such as seen in news interviews (Clayman, 1992; Heritage, 2003; LÈon, 2004), performance appraisal interviews (Asmuß, 2008), and negotiations at business meetings (Bilmes, 1995; Boden, 1995; Huisman, 2001). Nonetheless, merely

aligning and agreeing with each other is *not* appropriate in the service-assessment sequence. As mentioned above, stylists are not just service-providers, but also hair experts, who may be expected to disagree with a lay person's opinion at times. Additionally, one particular finding of this study shows that not only does a successful session closure depend on the stylist, but sometimes, it is the customer's communicative skill that works greatly to contribute to successful completion. Certainly, it includes the customer's enactment of the role of *novice*, which can be done through actions that highlight the stylist's expertise, such as acknowledging their expertise, avoiding strong negative comments regarding the service, and refraining from touching the new cut on his/her own. Nonetheless, my data reveals that acting as a novice is *not* enough for unproblematic progression of the service-assessment sequence. In fact, a successful outcome of the evaluation process often comes with the customer's verbal elaboration on the quality of the service, presenting his/her *own* thought in addition to agreeing with the stylist, and overall, harmonizing their responsibilities as novice and patron.

While there are a tremendous number of studies focusing on beauty salons, only a few have paid attention to the micro organizations of this particular work setting, and to the best of my knowledge, no previous study has ever uncovered this key moment found in salon interactions: the service-assessment sequence. Similarly, most of the studies center their interests on professional service-providers, but not on how the client actively plays the role of *professional* customer through their own various means. The quality of a service is an "interactional output" (Button, 1992), which we need to study in order to understand the interaction of the participants. Also, the present study focuses on the professionalization of communication in such a situation that most of us experience on regular basis; it is difficult to avoid service-encounters in our life, whether it be at hair salon or other service industries. In other words, it offers a profound understanding of

how we professionalize our communication for negotiation in somewhat “mundane” institutional settings and workplaces. What is crucial to note is that this study looks at both perspectives of service-providers and customers. By examining the professionalization of the stylist and the client, this study will also increase the scope of the study of service-encounter interactions, and client-provider relationships.

Secondly, this study is significant because it joins the growing body of multimodal analysis of interaction (Streeck & Knapp, 1992; Jarmon, 1996; Jones & LeBaron, 2002; Kendon, 2004; Stivers & Sidnell, 2005; Streeck & Mehus, 2005). A tremendous number of studies have looked (and currently look) at how people contextualize institutional environments through talk. However, many professional interactions are conducted in-person, and it is important that we pay attention to multiple modalities that together embody its professional context. Studies have shown that people at work employ various communicative resources, including talk, gestures, gaze, body postures, and material objects to accomplish work-related tasks (e.g., Goodwin, 1994; Streeck, 1996; LeBaron, 1998; Nevile, 2004; Murphy, 2005), emphasizing that social action is accomplished through various semiotic resources (Goodwin, 2000). In a similar fashion, my study also looks at how the participants use different communicative resources in achieving the delivery of professional service.

Yet, I also approach the study of multimodal communication from a rather new perspective, that is, by exploring the intricate relationship of talk and action. Several new and previous works have pursued this relationship, such as how pointing is used in the context of turn-taking organization (Mondada, 2007), how body orientation is managed in the context of talk (Kendon, 1990; Schegloff, 1998), and how the activity of eating is coordinated with talk (Oshima, 2003; Mondada, 2009). These studies reveal how bodily actions and physical activity are woven into the activity of talk. On the other hand, talk

may be employed and modified in the service of achieving physical tasks (Kleifgen, 2001; Nevile, 2004). My study differs from these studies because the service-assessment sequence is composed of two, equally essential, what I call “strands”: 1) the strand of talk (i.e., question, answer/assessment, and sequence-closing third); and 2) the strand of physical inspection of a service provided. In order to welcome a sequence-closure, these two strands need to be completed in unison, which requires particular skills for coordinating these strands from both the stylist’s and client’s part. Through my analyses, I question whether there is a hierarchical relationship, and if not, how can we explain this unique relationship, and argue that harmonizing these strands is vital for the professionalization of communication at hair salons. Therefore, pursuing the intricate relationship of talk and action will enrich the field of multimodal communication and microanalysis, in addition to bringing an enhanced understanding of professionalization of communication.

Last, but not least, this study also takes into consideration the cultural aspects of professional communication. The corpus of my data contains examples from Japan and the U.S., and several interactions between participants also run across different nationalities and/or cultural backgrounds, thus enabling me to investigate similarities and dissimilarities of communication patterns found between them.

As Funayama (2002) points out, by tradition, intercultural and cross-cultural communication studies have been conducted under the perspective of causal relationships between “culture” and “communication (pattern)” from a comparative point of view (Funayama, p. 257). Proponents of intercultural communication studies believed that viewing individuals as members of a culture (members whose native communicative styles are maintained in intercultural communication) enables us to increase scholars’ understanding of, often “problematic,” cultural differences. Accordingly, many studies of

cross-cultural and intercultural communication tend to apply pre-existing cultural theories to a communicative event, for example: how we can explain the differences between Japanese salon interactions and those in the U.S. with the low- vs. high-context theory.

The present study, on the other hand, approaches to the subject of cross-cultural communication by starting with meticulous observations of the participants' actions. The methodology of microanalysis has allowed me to find a number of sequential patterns shaped by the participants' actions, which may also vary among participants from different cultures. For example, the timely action of slightly raising one's own chin may be a result of culturally learned communication skills. Also, the service-assessment sequence itself may be shaped differently in Japan than in the U.S. due to the ecological environment that the participants are in, such as the cultural position of mirrors, tools, or other participants. Such arguments will be made only after, and based on, micro-observations of each sequence.

With awareness and respect to local sensitivities, this study also offers a view of universality among beauty salons. Several studies of interaction have revealed correspondences in forms of communicative patterns between different cultures, such as business type calls that cut across different cultures and languages (Park, 2002) and the culture of silence across different settings within a culture and among different cultures (Basso, 1990). Likewise, while their languages and cultures differ, the participants in the present study belong to the international culture of beauty salons. Through a microanalysis of the service-assessment sequence, this study attempts to reveal internationally shared professional knowledge in beauty salons.

With that said, differences in communication patterns are not always attributable to the cultural backgrounds of participants, but may relate to the various types of salons as well. Data collected in beauty salons I have visited range from slow-paced salons that

offer complimentary alcoholic drinks, to high volume/low profit margin hair salons with exceptionally inexpensive prices and speedy, but perhaps more “inattentive”, customer service. Through all of these, the manner of professionalism and professional knowledge may differ, so in what way would a participant’s expectations toward the delivery of a service be managed. In spite of happily paying for professional service, would one go as far as to style a cut oneself, and leave the professional stylist out of the picture? As I look at the service-assessment sequences collected in various types of salons, I show how people orient to such different types of service through micro-actions. Overall, by depicting various communication patterns seen at the event of negotiating and coming to consensus, this study addresses the relationship between the professionalization of communication and culture, and how one may influence the other in subtle, yet comprehensible ways.

1.4 ORGANIZATION OF THE DISSERTATION

This dissertation is organized into eight chapters. In Chapter 2, I begin with a survey of the research that has informed my investigation in the current project. I summarize the roles of beauty professionals as experts and caring service-providers in our culture, as well as the symbolic power of hairstyle and personal style. I then discuss some features and definitions of “professionalism” in cosmetological work, followed by an explanation of the service-assessment sequence. A review of analytical works concerning studies of the assessment sequence is also given, and the chapter ends with the literature review of studies of multimodality. Chapter 3 provides a description of the research sites and participants, and an explanation of the methodology used to collect and analyze data. Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7 provide empirical analyses of the interactional places. In Chapter 4, I present an interesting case of multiple Second Pair Parts that are

employed by customers, and explain their essential nature in regards to the participants' systematic coordination of the multiple strands. Chapter 5 also demonstrates several ways for coordinating talk and physical inspection, but I do so by analyzing sequence closure. The chapter discusses how the "appropriate" moment for sequence closure is determined, and *whose* satisfaction actually has a bearing on a "successful" closure. In Chapter 6, I shift my focus to head nods, which happened to be habitually found in the majority of Japanese service-assessment sequences. I first provide a brief literature review on the use of head nods, followed by an examination of several instances in which Japanese participants professionally use head nods. In this chapter, I also discuss a possible difference in the perceptions of "professional communication" between the U.S. and Japan. Chapter 7 touches upon the problematic moments of requesting and making a revision to the new cut during the service-assessment sequence. A microanalysis of those moments reveals that the stylist and customer frequently work on formulating events of fixing a cut as a *mutual* decision between them, and balance their expert/novice responsibilities, and the emotional work for a pursuit of a client's satisfaction. In that chapter, I also look at how the stylists in different types of salons handle the request by the client, which leads me to a discussion of diversity in professional knowledge. Finally, in Chapter 8, I provide a summary of my findings and attempt to explain how my micro findings contribute to an understanding of the professionalization of communication in beauty service industries.

Chapter 2. Professionalization of Communication in Beauty Salons

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Obeyseskere (1998) makes a remarkable statement about hair:

Hair is by itself not a ‘natural symbol’ but one that provokes the work of culture. Hair is just there as a product of our biological inheritance; but it cannot be just left there. Hair must be dealt with; thus everywhere there is cultural control of hair and this includes those groups who let their hair down or keep it in a culturally defined ‘natural’ state (Obeyesekere, 1998, p. xii).

The quality of the service at beauty salons, which consists mostly of haircutting and coiffure (hairstyling) sessions, may not be treated as seriously as other types of beautification services that demand more financial and mental commitment. For example, cosmetic surgery is, by nature, more expensive and requires a higher level of resources than haircutting. Because hair (and the removal of hair) has become so commonplace, we may often overlook its importance in our everyday lives. Nonetheless, hair has been a major factor in constructing our identity in society (e.g., McCracken, 1996; Banks, 2000; Weitz, 2004). Banks (2000), Jacobs-Huey (2006), and Rooks (1996) understand hair as a political and racial representation among African-American women. Hair’s power and meaning in other cultures have been identified as well, such as (but not limited to) South Asian countries (Olivelle, 1998), Korea (Nelson, 1998), and Indians in North America (Miller, 1998).

Despite its enormous power in our society, hair provides us with one of the simplest, most effortless means of beautification. In terms of cost, time, and the degree of commitment, haircutting and styling is more accessible and affordable in comparison to other means of physical self-improvement. Yet, this method of beautification still offers what Simmel (1950) calls, “nearly infinitely mutable adornment” (p. 339). Because of

those characteristics of hair, it is appropriate for beautician and customer to negotiate the quality of the service *after* the service has been provided (in contrast, surgeons and patients involved in cosmetic surgery put more effort in a consultation session, as it is usually too late to negotiate the quality of the surgery after it has been completed). Likewise, the service-assessment sequence found throughout the cosmetological service industry becomes a more appropriate and interesting place to observe the negotiations that participants engage in, and moreover, in which the professionalization of communication in beauty salons is revealed.

This chapter reviews previous research that has direct relevance to the present study. Specifically, it aims to capture possible elements of professionalization of communication in beauty salons by reporting a range of discourses. In order to do so, I must first give some background information regarding beauty professionals in general, which illustrates the increased need for professional beauty experts in culture, as opposed to mere providers/sellers of service. However, demonstrating one's authority as a beauty expert alone is not enough for enacting the role of a professional cosmetologist. The second set of literature provides us with knowledge of a new trend among beautification services: pampering. Hence, it is in an effective harmonization of these – at times contradicting – roles as an expert and a caring service-provider that the professionalization of cosmetologists is found.

Then, how are these different roles juggled in an action sequence? The third section of this chapter discusses selected CA studies that have bearing on the communicative acts performed in the service-assessment sequence, such as making assessments, agreeing and disagreeing, and closing sequence. In addition, one act is often composed of multiple communicative resources, especially at a place like a beauty salon full of physical movement and conversation. Thus, the last section of this chapter

introduces the works on multimodal interaction at workplaces, and discusses how multimodal analysis contributes to a better understanding of professionalization of communication.

2.1 THE INCREASED NEED FOR BEAUTY EXPERTS AND THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION

While beauty service workers may be identified as “service-providers” on one hand, there has been an increased need for “expert knowledge” and “morality” among beauty industries. This is due to the excessive consumption of beautification services and the risks that may arise from it. Most previous studies appear to approach female beauty as a social phenomenon from a critical perspective. According to Lakoff and Scherr (1984), there is no permanent definition for beauty; rather, standards of beauty are determined by society, culture, and the media. Similarly, Chapkis (1986) and Wolf (1991) interpret beauty as demand and judgment upon women, which explains why women are often made to have such negative self and body images. Consequently, women consume more personal beautification products and services than their male counterparts in the pursuit of greater acceptance and self-acceptance. Recent studies have focused on the semiotic powers of people’s bodily adornment practices, as illustrated by makeup (Peiss, 1988), tanning (Vannini & McCright, 2004), hair removal (Toerien, Wilkinson et al., 2005), and cosmetic surgery (Davis & Vernon, 2002). Warhurst and Nickson et al. (2000) have described what they call “aesthetic labour” that is, self-presentation skills including dress, voice, and accents, and suggest that it rises among female workers in the service industries. These studies argue that, through beautification services, people pay not only for the actual services themselves but also for their longing

for acceptance by society and their own psychological (including egoistic and narcissistic) fulfillment.

Another set of studies focuses on ethical dilemmas posed by beautification practices. Culturally- and politically- shaped definitions of beauty call for serious concern about women's identities as well as ethical issues. Cusumano and Thompson (1997) and Engeln-Maddox (2006) are concerned with how women's internalization of social standards of appearance presented in magazines increases their dissatisfaction with their appearance. Lindner (2004) similarly points out that the ideal of female beauty in women's magazines is unchanged in spite of the women's movement. On the other hand, Spitzack (1990) criticizes that excessive dialogue in women's health and weight loss are often encouraged by "experts" as well as family, friends, and romantic partners. Such arrangements of health and weight loss can overwhelm and dominate women, requiring constant work, for example, on body size (Goodman, 1995). The results can be mental and physical dissatisfaction, leading to risky behaviors and eating disorders (Chernin, 1983; Winkler & Cole, 1994). The authors argue for dialogue between ethics and the beauty industries, particularly since almost any level of beautification is now available for women as a means of self-expression (and often mental satisfaction and personal care) in contemporary society.

As in beauty studies generally, the majority of participants in my study – roughly 80% – are female. Female participants were more inclined to make or to have existing appointments with their hairstylists than their male counterparts, which made it easier to schedule tapings in advance. Three out of the six male participants in my study actually followed their female partners, and the remaining male participants contacted the researcher the day before (or on the same day as) the haircutting session took place. Such episodes may allow us to assume that women, in general, take their haircutting visits

more seriously, and/or tend to visit the type of salons that require appointments, instead of walk-ins.

While most interactions in beauty salons take place among women, male participants in my data did not show that they were any less sensitive about their personal appearances. Some studies have revealed that men also pursue mental satisfaction through their looks. Accordingly, expectations of men's own physical appearance have reached such high standards (Bordo, 2000; Hatoum & Belle, 2004). For example, cultural norms of male beauty define male bodies as sex objects both for women and men (Bordo, 2000). Men (just like women) are concerned with and driven by cultural presentations of male beauty/masculinity/sexiness (Gilmore, 1994). In her study of *Men's Health* magazine, Alexander (2003) argues that "a real man" requires well-built muscles, fashionable clothes, and an overall presentation of financial success. In societies which accept only a very limited range of body appearances as positive images, it is normal to see body dissatisfaction both in women and in men (Rogan, 1999).

These studies focus on the mental and physical burdens that are brought on through social norms for bodily appearance. Accordingly, they bring attention to the lack of an institution or board that could set standards for ethical decision-making where female beauty is concerned. In other words, the task of beauty professionals should not be understood as merely letting their clients consume their products and services, nor should the quantity of consumption alone define their professionalism. Rather, beauty professionals are expected to be responsible for the task of being wary of the excessive notion of beauty and advising their clients with their own philosophy, which may include a disagreement with a customer's "unhealthy" desire at times.

In order to meet such expectations, service-providers must professionalize their communication as much as, or perhaps more than, their trade skills (e.g., the use of

scissors to create layers). In fact, professional tasks, which might have been mainly understood in terms of a professional's practical and hands-on expertise, have now become identified with the practice of communicative skills (e.g., Peräkylä, 1998; Robinson, 1998; Heritage & Stivers, 1999; Drew, Chatwin et al., 2001; Mirivel, 2007a; Mirivel, 2007b). A number of interactionist researchers have revealed how professionals deliver professional services through communication. Much of this scholarly work has centered on the successful completion of professional tasks and has perceived them as interactional and local (re)productions, also described by conversation analysts as: “the *interactional accomplishment of particular social activities*” (Drew & Heritage, 1992, p. 17). Correspondingly, the present study looks at professional beauty-related interactions as communicative events, and investigates what it means to professionalize communication in beauty-related professions.

So what is “professionalization”? Professionalization has been widely discussed among various fields of experts. As early as the 1960s, Wilensky (1964) was aware of the increased role of professionalization across many professions. Since then, many studies have investigated the professionalization of teaching (e.g., Leggatt, 1970; Agarao-Fernandez & Guzman, 2006), religious education (e.g., Heil & Ziebertz, 2004; Parker, Beaty et al., 2007), social work (e.g., Freedberg, 1993), and political parties (e.g., Mancini, 1999; Lilleker & Negrine, 2002). “Professionalization” itself can have several definitions: for politicians, it can mean becoming “communication machines” that use new technical communications media effectively (Mancini, 1999, p. 243); for religious educators it may mean to “cultivate a reflective *habitus* that enables them to analyse the demands of the situation and react accordingly” (Heil & Ziebertz, 2004, p. 235). Although not using the same terminology, Goffman (1959) had noted these skills in the concept of “idealization”: presenting an idealized version of self. He also provided us

with the notion of “rhetorical training” through which people acquire license to act for the good of the profession (p. 46). Nevertheless, the meaning expressed by these definitions is consistent; it is in their socialization that novices acquire the necessary skills for transforming themselves into a professional (see Larson, 1977 for details).

Some studies have previously suggested the importance of professionalized communication skills in beauty-related professions. Jacobs-Huey (2003) studied language socialization among African-American cosmetology students. She found that, besides acquiring practical, hands-on skills, it is important for students to “learn to speak as, and hence, become ‘hair experts’” (p. 277). Such training includes the appropriate use of jargon, volume, and methods of asking relevant questions of clients. According to Jacobs-Huey, by performing the rhetoric of hair care, stylists do not only become hair experts but also make their service worthy of payment. Correspondingly, LeFebvre and Marwick (2006) found that learning to cut hair was not only about simply gaining technical skills but also about enacting “hairstylists’ *habitus*”, or essentially acting as hairstylists would otherwise. While observing a beauty salon in New York City, they noticed that this apprenticeship process is mainly conducted through language (e.g., certain ways of using words to describe good/bad haircuts). Thus, professionalization is often about specializing proficiency in particular communication skills (i.e., speaking as a hairstylist, speaking as a political leader, linking students’ religious experiences with professional religious meanings, etc.). Subsequently, professions are identified with the degree to which they demonstrate characteristics of professionalization (Hughes, 1963).

Thus far, I have discussed the increased need for demonstrating expertise among beauticians and how they may do so through communication. However, professionalization in beauty-related professions is not limited to the acquisition of speaking as a knowledgeable stylist.

2.2 THE NEW TREND AT BEAUTY SALONS: “PAMPERING”

In general, service-providers and customers in beauty salons have many opportunities to socialize with one another because of the amount of time it takes to complete the service. The service-provider’s task during this time is to take care of not only the body but also the mind and spirit of customers. Today we call this pampering. While pampering in the context of beauty salon services often refers to the physical indulgence of the subjects (i.e., providing a massage before/after the haircutting session, using aromatherapy), the present study is mainly concerned with how pampering is done through “emotional labour” (Hochschild, 1983). In her well-known book, *The Managed Heart*, Hochschild describes how flight attendants “commercialize their feelings.” According to her, it is not enough for flight attendants to simply demonstrate their sympathy or affection for customers. Rather, they are required to train themselves in “deep acting” (as opposed to “surface acting”) so that they are able to feel specific emotions that are relative to their customers. Since then, “emotional labor” has been widely recognized as “labour-intensive work; it is skilled, effort-intensive, and productive labour” (Steinberg & Figart, 1999, p. 9). Studies of emotional labor have been conducted in various, male- and female-specific occupations and industries, such as engineering (Van Maanen & Kunda, 1989), nursing (O'Brien, 1994; Pierce, 1995), detective or criminal interrogating (Stenross & Kleinman, 1989; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1991; Martin, 1999), bill-collecting (Sutton, 1991), insurance sales and service (Leidner, 1991), fast food service (Leidner, 1991; Hall, 1993; Leidner, 1993; Paules, 1996), retail service (Sutton & Rafaeli, 1988; Rafaeli, 1989), and teaching (Bellas, 1999).

Professional communication in beauty-related services is not limited merely to conversations about beauty and beautification itself, but it can include any small talk, introduction, transactional negotiation and/or closure as well. In accomplishing these

tasks, stylists may be required to become engaged in customers' lives (Gimlin, 1996), and use a range of communication strategies for the various needs of different clients, such as those who have problems with their bodies and those who have family issues (Black, 2004). In McCracken's words, hairdressers "metamorph" and "transform themselves in order to transform the client" (McCracken, 1996, p. 192). The emotional work at beauty salons may then be conducted by exhibiting cultural/societal identities (e.g., age, class, ethnicity, and gender). For example, Jacobs-Huey (2006) claims that hair care, at least for African-American women, is "a linguistic and cultural engagement with" the identities they (re)produce (p. 4). Equally, Willet (2000) claims that beauty salons have been one of the most popular places for women to socialize. Willet writes about her grandmother and her grandmother's friends, who used beauty salons as "saloons" in which women shared "invaluable source[s] of information and the same types of social networks," thereby creating their own culture and identities (p. 2). Kerner Furman (1997) also studies beauty salon culture and focuses on older women who are often neglected and are excluded from the socially constructed notion of beauty. Her ethnographic study reveals how these women create the friendly, emotional, and supportive community in a neighborhood beauty salon through (but not limited to) beauty-related conversations. By means of socialization with service-providers and other customers, the subjects construct their cultural/societal identities and make sense of their lives.

This kind of "pampering" happens as expected when service-provider and customer discover that they share similar cultural-societal identities. However, that is not always the case; sometimes there is a difference of class between beauticians (e.g., working-class) and clients (e.g., middle- or upper-class). Beauticians may then enact their professional identities (e.g., demonstrating professional knowledge of hairstyles) and thus transcend class discrepancies between themselves and their clients (Gimlin, 1996). But

such use of beauty work does not seem to treat – pamper – customers’ minds. In fact, this attempt often fails, Gimlin says, because: 1) clients, who supposedly hold higher class status than the hairstylists, resist the cultural ideals presented by hairstylists and insist on their own ideas regarding beauty from their everyday experiences; and 2) hairstylists’ emotional work, such as talking with/listening to clients and aligning with them, is a crucial part of beauty work. Thus, hairstylists may end up working on a hairstyle that contradicts their own image of beauty. This is problematic because it contradicts their role as a beauty expert, as discussed earlier in this chapter. In short, Gimlin’s study hinges on the dilemma that professional stylists may face; there is a significant need for emotional work in beauty salons, and it may override other professional tasks, such as providing the stylists’ own, expert opinions. Yet, she does not explain exactly how such a dilemma emerges and how stylists and customers work with it in interaction. By closely examining the service-assessment sequence, the present study aims to answer this question as well.

Toerien and Kitzinger (2007a) also explore emotional labor by observing an eyebrow hair removal session. They argue that while the direct goal is to accomplish the hair removal – to “get it done” –, a service-provider takes time to offer professional knowledge on hair wax, as well as talking about and aligning with a customer’s concerns. All of these elements serve to reconfirm her decision to undergo hair waxing. In other words, “task-directed talk” can function to achieve emotional work, and this well-mixed combination of physical task and mental treatment of a client completes a professional beautification process. Similarly, for balancing these tasks, beauticians may delay the hair removal “in favor of the ‘chat’, prioritizing their ‘relational tasks’” (Toerien & Kitzinger, 2007b, p. 656).

Indeed, the professional management of “multiple involvements” is an important element of emotional labor (Toerien & Kitzinger, 2007b), and professionals in different areas are often required to accomplish both physical tasks and personal care of customers also. Moreover, we often manage multiple events for effective everyday communication (e.g., eating and talking at a dinner table, working and chatting, etc.). Yet, the coordination of multiple involvements in the service-assessment sequence does not solely refer to a service-provider’s coordination of talk and physical task. Here, the physical tasks refer to an inspection of the quality of a service, which requires the client’s active engagement in, and coordination of, talk and action, as well as the service-provider’s facility to supervise and adjust the progress of physical inspection and talk so that they are simultaneously completed. Likewise, while the studies described above emphasize the importance of a beauty therapist’s constant engagement in emotional work, they do not fully explain the communicative skills on demand at beauty salons.

2.3 JUGGLING THE ROLES OF BEAUTY EXPERT AND SERVICE-PROVIDER

As argued above, service-providers have to care about both the body and mind of customers. However, doing emotional work and pampering during the service-assessment sequence is challenging, as it may conflict with the participants’ central task of the negotiation of the quality of the offered service, through which stylists may be expected to demonstrate their expertise and professional knowledge. At times, performing the role of a beauty expert may override emotional work. In other words, an appropriate management of the two different roles – knowledgeable beauty expert and caring service-provider – is a vital element for a successful outcome of the service-assessment sequence.

While the idea of professionalization of communication at beauty salons may be relatively new, the current study begins by going back to Goffman’s classic notion of

social interaction. Goffman (1967; 1971) points out that even our seemingly natural appearances are “acted out,” and what we consider ordinary interactions are “ritual”: “a perfunctory, conventionalized act” through which the participants play their relevant roles (Goffman, 1971, p. 62). Yet, the participants of an interaction (“actor” and “recipient”) have many relationships to one another, and they often participate “in terms of a special capacity or status; in short, in terms of a special self” (Goffman, 1967, p. 52). In the activity of haircutting, the participants engage at various levels of relationships such as expert-novice, and service provider-patron. At times, their cultural identities may also be foregrounded in their interaction. As Goffman emphasizes, whatever roles people in interaction play, it is essential that they precisely understand and accept their own (and the other’s) roles at each moment. This order is also seen in his descriptions of the reciprocal relationship of the actor’s “obligations” (the way one acts) and the recipient’s “expectations” (the particular way the other is treated). When they are unbalanced, both actor and recipient confront face threats (Goffman 1967, p. 51). In fact, the interaction cannot even be organized without the participants’ sensitivity to, and the precise understanding and demonstration of their positions in, the interactional context (p. 31).

Goffman’s notion is significant to the present study in that it describes the participants’ tasks of juggling different roles. This is relevant to the service-assessment sequence, in which the stylist may face a possible dilemma of managing conflicting tasks, such as being a knowledgeable beauty expert (whose status as expert is “higher” than that of a novice customer) and a “flatterer” who indulges the body and mind of a client. Likewise, the customer may underplay the role of patron to highlight their inexperience in hair and beauty. They have to find a good balance in juggling these roles to accomplish the task of coming to consensus and producing a successful outcome (i.e., a pleasing haircut). The aforementioned studies of beauty salons imply the need for an embodiment

of different roles in professionalizing communication, but do not provide profound observations of *how* people accomplish working with and harmonizing the multiple roles, especially during one of the most sensitive moments of a haircutting activity: the service-assessment sequence. On the contrary, the microanalysis of the service-assessment sequence shows how the participants determine and embody their appropriate roles as they interact and observe each other's moment-by-moment actions. Indeed, there are many hints and communicative resources in interactions that guide the participants to conducting "appropriate" actions in the event of negotiating the quality of a provided service.

2.4 INGREDIENTS OF THE SERVICE-ASSESSMENT SEQUENCE

The present study explores the meanings of professionalization of communication by looking at various practices that the participants employ during a particular action sequence. This sequence – the service-assessment sequence – is roughly composed of: 1) the stylist's initiation (e.g., asking the customer whether s/he likes the cut); 2) the customer's assessment of the service; and 3) the stylist's acknowledgement of, and/or (dis)agreement with the customer's assessment. Alternatively, the stylist may provide an assessment of the new cut, and that may be agreed or disagreed upon by the customer. Chapter 3 gives details on how these different actions are captured and examined within the present study, but for the moment it should be pointed out that the service-assessment sequence is composed of multiple successive acts, such as making assessments and performing agreement/disagreement. Also, a service-assessment sequence may be closed through a sub-sequence. While the service-assessment sequence is often completed by the stylist's acknowledgement of a customer's assessment (i.e., "Sequence Closing Third"),

another sequence may be occasionally inserted to complete the service-assessment sequence as a whole.

Thus, this section focuses on the studies that examine the various actions involved in the service-assessment sequence. To do so, I will first briefly introduce general ideas of sequence organization and sketch how the analysis of sequences has contributed to an understanding of social activities. I will then survey CA studies of assessments, which demonstrate that assessments are interactively organized. Once an assessment is made, the next relevant action from the other participant is generally agreeing or disagreeing. Thus, I will review literature on agreement/disagreement, which is inseparable from a discussion of preference organization. And lastly, some studies on sequence/encounter closure will be discovered.

2.4.1 Sequence Organization

Sequences are a vital element of social interaction. Schegloff (2007) explains sequence as “courses of action implemented through talk” (p. 3), and thus sequence organization as: “the organization of courses of action enacted through turns-at-talk – coherent, orderly, meaningful successions or ‘sequences’ of actions or ‘moves’, as they are “the vehicle for getting some activity accomplished” (2007, p. 2). The most basic type of sequence is the “adjacency pair,” which emerges as one person greets or asks a question (First Pair Part, i.e. FPP), and the other returns a greeting or an answer to the question (Second Pair Part, i.e., SPP) (e.g., Sacks, Schegloff et al., 1974; Schegloff 2007). Through an adjacency pair – even simple utterances such as “Hello” and “May I help you?” –, people can “assemble activities” (Sacks, 1995, p. 10).

We organize sequences distinctively in different social contexts, and certain everyday actions such as trouble telling (Jefferson, 1988), storytelling (Jefferson, 1978),

rejections (Davidson, 1984), and complaints (Drew & Holt, 1988) are managed through specific forms of sequence organization. Likewise, various institutional activities also are constructed through characteristic sequence organizations, such as news interviews (e.g., Greatbatch, 1988; Heritage, 2003), medical interviews (Peräkylä, 1998; Heritage & Stivers, 1999; Jones 2001), classrooms (Mehan, 1974; McHoul, 1978; Atkinson, 1981; Seedhouse, 2004), institutional phone calls (Zimmerman, 1992; Baker, Emmison et al., 2001), business meetings (Boden, 1995; Huisman, 2001; Asmuß & Svennevig, 2009), and technical teamwork (e.g., Kleifgen, 2001; Nevile, 2004). The present study also seeks to gain a better understanding of one form of professional communication (beauty service industries) by examining the organization of a particular action sequence.

2.4.2 Interactional Features of Assessment

One of the main actions conducted by the participants in the service-assessment sequence is making an assessment of the haircut, i.e., whether the new cut “looks good.” Assessments are practiced in various social activities, and have been studied considerably from its interactional point of view. Goodwin and Goodwin (1987, 1992) recognize several events that “assessment” refers to: described objects, persons, and events (e.g., the adjective “beautiful”) to a particular type of speech act, such as performing affection and displaying one’s experience (1992, pp. 154-155)¹. According to Pomerantz (1984), assessments generally occur in three positions: (a) when participants access to a particular referent or experience, (b) within reports of past events, and (c) in paired sequences where a first assessment is followed by a second. The cases seen with the present study

¹ They identify “assessment segment,” which “is used to designate a specific, segmental unit in the stream of the speech” (i.e., the adjective “beautiful”) (p. 154). In addition, the assessments that constitute certain speech acts are named “assessment action,” “assessment activity,” and “assessable will.” They also refer to “the entity being evaluated by an assessment” as “assessable” (p. 156), and examine various kinds of assessments that are positioned before/after assessable.

are (a) and (c); the participants make an assessment as they expose themselves to a new haircut, and they also respond to each other's assessment via additional assessments (e.g., "I like it." "I like it, too.").

A point that has been made in various studies of assessment is that they have *interactional* characteristics. Maynard (2003) studies the numerous functions of assessments in the telling/hearing of good/bad news. For instance, tellers may make assessments for closing a news delivery sequence, and recipients' employment of assessments may encourage tellers to continue the story (pp. 110-112). In so doing, the participants may shape their assessments differently for different functions. Maynard notes that some oh-prefaced assessments, such as "oh, dear" and "oh, good", are treated as "standardized." Compared to other oh-prefaced items that function as newsmarks (e.g., "oh, really?"), these assessments are considered weak, as they display no clear sign for requesting more information or elaboration (pp. 103-4).

Thus, people achieve various things by designing an assessment in one way over the other, and can even display the degree of their knowledge and authority through making assessments (Heritage & Raymond, 2005). For instance, the first speakers' assessments tend to accompany an indication that they have primary authority in the matter. As a result, they may shape their assessments to underestimate their knowledge (e.g., "She *seems* nice"). On the other hand, the second speaker may explicitly exhibit his/her knowledge through an upgraded claim (e.g., "Oh I *know* she is"). From such assessments, we come to understand that "[r]ights to evaluate states of affairs are indeed 'ordinarily patrolled and defended' by individuals in routine conversational practices through which these rights are ranked by speakers relative to one another" (Heritage & Raymond, , p. 34).

A simple assessment turn is often organized and modified as other participants simultaneously produce vocal and/or nonvocal reactions (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1987). Hence, participants can display their alignment or disalignment to each other *during* the process of making an assessment. For instance, when a speaker locates the assessment (e.g., “beautiful”), the recipient may be given an opportunity for alignment with the speaker in the midst of the turn by co-constructing the utterance of the evaluated object (e.g., “car”). Thus, assessments “integrate a range of phenomena occurring within the turn” despite their simple appearances, and participants organize assessments in a way that they can share their experience and access to the entity being evaluated (Goodwin & Goodwin, p. 49).

Correspondingly, assessments performed in the service-assessment sequence are highly interactive. Customers use oh-prefaced assessments – as a “news receipt” (Heritage, 1984) – when they gather new information on the cut through physical inspection. On the other hand, the stylist may use oh-prefaced assessments for achieving the authority as expert when responding to the customer (e.g., “Oh yeah (I know).”) which was also discussed earlier by Heritage and Raymond. They may at times join each other’s assessment to demonstrate a strong alignment. Thus, by making assessments, the participants of a service-assessment sequence do not only share their access to the assessable (i.e., a new cut), but they exercise their certain relevant roles and negotiate the meanings of a qualifying, professional service.

Yet, the purpose of the present study is not to examine the functions of assessments *per se*, but to understand the practice of assessing something in the context of the service-assessment sequence, i.e., its role in the specific situation of negotiating the quality of a provided service. Mondada (2009), who analyzes food assessments during dinner conversations, has shown that participants may employ food assessments to

initiate or close a conversational topic, and moreover, may insert food assessments in delicate moments of possible conflict and disagreement between participants. In institutional contexts, assessments are often employed and attended to in relation to a specific task. For instance, Pillet-Shore (2003) treats “okay” as “a practical assessment device” in his analysis of parent-teacher conferences. He introduces two different values that are shaped by “okay”: binary (e.g., “doing okay” versus “not doing okay”) and graded metric (e.g., “grade C is okay”). He argues that “okay” assessments of student performance are especially important in this context, where teacher and parents tend to avoid an overt conflict between them. On the other hand, Glenn, Koschmann, and Conlee (1999) describe how group members (a coach and his students) employ assessments for the purpose of coming to accept or reject theories presented by a group member during a Problem-Based Learning meeting. Through a single case analysis, they reveal that the process of theorizing – involving the use of assessments – is highly interactive, and whether a theory wins or fails is determined in interaction.

In other workplace settings, people may enact institutional roles by omitting assessments, such as when interviewers are requested to take a neutral position in news interviews (e.g., Greatbatch, 1988), job interviews (e.g., Button, 1992), and medical interviews (Jones 2001). Yet, their interlocutors, as in the case of medical interviews, may attend to the absence of assessments as problematic events. Jones (2001) describes how assessments are omitted from the physician’s part during medical interviews; physicians instead provide acknowledgement tokens, silence, or simply move on to the next question. She recognizes that while physicians practice this out of professional motivation (holding an objective attitude, staying in the neutral position, etc.), it is not what patients expect from their physicians. This gap between what patients expect and what physicians do may cause an uncomfortable rupture in the flow of medical

interviews. This example demonstrates the importance of the participants' precise understanding and appropriate negotiation of the context that they are in, which is seen in a simple assessment (or its absence). Moreover, depending on the context, one can be identified as a professional (or an unprofessional) via production of, or withholding of, a single assessment.

All of these studies suggest that assessments are employed to accomplish particular sets of social, and often professional, tasks in specific situations. Similarly, my purpose is not to define the lack of assessments as a mere communication problem. During the service-assessment sequence, a customer withholding an assessment often generates room for service-providers to elaborate on vocal/nonvocal actions (e.g., fixing the hairstyle, providing explanation for what the stylist has done, complimenting the new haircut, etc.) and thus elevates the customer's degree of satisfaction. Also, a stylist may omit an assessment out of contextual and professional motivation, whereas customers' restraint of an assessment may occasionally contribute to their roles as a sound customer.

Now, a speaker's assessment is followed by another's take on it. More specifically, performing an assessment activates the other's next relevant action: agreeing or disagreeing with it. Our next step is to consider the actions of agreement and disagreement, and some practices for performing them.

2.4.3 Agreement and Complexity of Preference

The primary activity of the service-assessment sequence is to negotiate the quality of the service, during which stylists and clients make value assessments. Assessing then, often makes agreeing/disagreeing the next relevant action from the other, and normally,

agreement is preferred over disagreement in social interaction (Sacks, 1987)². Generally speaking, when the first speaker makes an assessment, the projected next response is an agreement, with which a sequence for the course of action is implemented. Such a system of preference is applicable to other courses of actions, for example: acceptance is a preferred response to offer or invite (Davidson, 1984).

Yet, we have to be careful that the term “preference” used in CA studies is distinct in that it refers to “a social/interactional feature of sequences and of orientations to them, not a *psychological one*” (Schegloff, 2007, p. 61). As Schegloff states:

It is not a matter of the motives or desires or likings (in that sense of “preferences”) of the participants – whether speaker or recipient, of first or second pair part (although in any given case the sequential preference and individual leaning may coincide, perhaps even in most cases). “Preferred” and “dispreferred” refer rather to a structural relationship of sequence parts (Schegloff, 2007, p. 61).

Thus, the organization of preference concerns the issue of aligning with the action that is indicated through an FPP, and the concern is embodied by the way people design their turns, through “preferred/dispreferred-action turn shapes” (Pomerantz, 1984). Pomerantz argued that a participant’s degree of agreement or disagreement with a previous assessment (made by another speaker) is displayed by the way s/he designs his/her response. One way to shape his/her responsive actions – toward assessment, request, offer, and so on – is through a “preferred-action turn shape” that “maximizes the occurrences of the actions being performed with them, utilizes minimization of gaps between its initiation and a prior turn’s completion, and contains components that are explicitly stated instances of the action being performed.” She goes on to state that the other is a “dispreferred-action turn shape” that “minimizes the occurrences of the actions

² Pomerantz (1984) describes this social phenomenon as: “across different situations, conversants orient to agreeing with one another as comfortable, supportive, reinforcing, perhaps as being sociable and as showing that they are like-minded” and thus view “disagreeing with one another as uncomfortable, unpleasant, [and] difficult,” therefore “risking threat, insult, or offense” (pp. 76-77).

performed with them, in part utilizing the organization of delays and nonexplicitly stated action components, such as actions other than a conditionally relevant next” (p. 64). Alternatively, the second speaker may join and/or complete the first speaker’s turn before it is finished. Such employment of “anticipatory completion” serves to produce a preferred action of agreement (Lerner, 1996).

Yet, some practices of preferred responses may not be considered as qualified agreements. For example, a second speaker’s mere repetition of the assessment made by the first speaker (“I like it” “I like it, too”) may not be convincing; instead, the second speaker has to “upgrade” the assessment (“Oh I love it!”) (Pomerantz, 1984). Likewise, Houtkoop (1987) shows how the initial speaker reacts to “weak acceptance-forms” differently from how s/he reacts to “full-acceptance forms³.” Initial speakers often treat weak acceptance-forms as not good enough and elaborate a sequence by “accounting for the proposal,” “analyzing recipient’s problem,” or “prompting full acceptance” (pp. 88-98).

Thus, people are responsive to the preference organization, and engage in various practices in the pursuit of a preferred outcome. When a speaker recognizes a sign of imminent disagreement from the other, s/he can modify the initial turn in order for the second speaker to agree after all (Sacks, 1987). At other times, even if disagreements happen, participants find ways to compromise and come to an agreement, as seen in negotiations of decision-making in institutional/business conversations (e.g., Bilmes, 1995; Boden, 1995; Firth, 1995; Huisman, 2001; Saft, 2001).

Some studies have explored preference for agreement in specific contexts. Goodwin (1983) looked at conversations of black, urban children and found that

³ She identifies “full acceptance-forms” as utterances like “Fine,” “Ja fine,” “Okay,” “No problem”, and so on, while “weak acceptance-forms” are, in her analysis, just a simple “Ja” and “Oh”, as well as the use of partial repeats and silences (pp. 69-88).

disagreement may be perceived differently among them in comparison to adults, who often avoid or mitigate such actions. According to her, children work on aggravated disagreements, such as direct, strong agreements with the use of emphasized tone or words such as “huh?” or “what.” In contrast to the interaction among adults, children actively engage in such actions to achieve their own rights. Thus, when disagreements do occur, they do not tend to work on reconciliation, but rather upgrade their disagreements (Goodwin, 1983). Yet among adults too, disagreements may be encouraged in some situated contexts, such as debates (Greatbatch, 1988) and disputes (Kotthoff, 1993), which are often *based on* disagreements among participants. In other words, people sometimes engage in disagreements for various purposes such as achieving authority and offering contradictory opinions to the audience. Asmuß (2008) also argues for the context-sensitivity of preference in her study of performance appraisal interviews⁴. She found that while critical feedback, which is often performed through negative assessments, is an integral part of performance appraisal interviews, participants still treat the production of negative assessments as problematic and dispreferred. She also calls attention to the supervisor’s (interviewer’s) behavior by noting that without the supervisor’s orientation to critical feedback as a dispreferred action, it would be easier for the employee to address negative assessments. In fact, if the supervisor shapes his/her turn in a way that negative assessments are *sought for*, the employee would align with it by openly providing critical feedback.

In the service-assessment sequence, matters of agreement, disagreement, and preference need to be carefully examined in relation to its complex context. While positive assessments of the service quality are generally preferred, the stylist may seek a

⁴ Asmuß (2008) defines the term performance appraisal interviews as “recurrent strategic interviews between a superior in an organization and an employee that focus on employee performance and development” (p. 409).

customer's negative assessment at times, especially when a revision of a cut (and the time spent for it) is an option. Also, disagreement may be performed for a demonstration of the stylist's expert knowledge or the client's earnest desire for a particular look. Such actions may be identified as a thorough, persistent negotiation of what each party considers as valuable and necessary for the delivery of a fair, professional, and satisfactory service. On top of that, the participants conduct a physical inspection of a new cut during the service-assessment sequence, which may hold back a customer's service-assessment, and in fact, the delayed response may be oriented to as a preferred action⁵. Indeed, the multiple strands of the service-assessment sequence (talk and physical inspection) complicate the preference organization, including the preference for progressivity.

Schegloff (2007) explains progressivity as: “[m]oving from some element to a hearably-next-one with nothing intervening is the embodiment of, and the measure of, progressivity” (p. 15). There is a general preference for responsive actions (e.g., an answer to a question, a greeting in return for a greeting, and an agreement to an assessment) in social interaction (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973; Schegloff 2007). This preference for progressivity is so strongly oriented to that it may be more valued than a response by the next *selected* speaker; when the next selected speaker somehow does not provide an answer to the first speaker, non-selected recipients may work on promoting progressivity (Stivers & Robinson, 2006).

A concern for progressivity is relevant for the service-assessment sequence as well, where the participants' central task involves a number of exchanges of adjacency

⁵ Among many researchers who have applied Pomerantz' principles into various communicative settings, Jarmon's work is noticeable in a way that she treats a participant's nonvocalized embodied action-turn as an agreement display (Jarmon, 1996). She argues, people do shape their preferred/dispreferred-action turn not only by way of vocal actions but also with purely nonvocal actions alone, and in turn, their interactants orient to them.

pairs within a limited time. However, the service-provider's task also involves taking time to ensure the customer's satisfaction with the outcome. To do so, stylists often attend to a customer's bodily actions that may indicate continuation of the sequence, such as continuing to hold a hand-held mirror, taking a closer look at the new haircut, and continuing to touch or feel through the hair. In responding to these actions, stylists may initiate a prolonging or reopening of the sequence, rather than closing the sequence. Customers may also delay their responses to the stylist's questions about the quality of a service due to their engagement in the physical inspection. The present study aims to explore how the participants accomplish those tasks (e.g., taking the sufficient time for physical inspection) that may contradict the general preference for progressivity.

To sum up the current section, a mixture of various tasks makes the service-assessment sequence worth attention for analysis. Based on the studies surveyed above, the present study analyzes communicative practices that the participants use for performing agreements, disagreements, preferred actions, and dispreferred actions without offending others or facing uncomfortable moments. I will also examine ways the participants move the sequence forward by looking at the multiple strands of talk and physical inspection, and explore how the participants deal with the moments in which the preference for progressivity is overridden by the need for a service-provider's additional, emotional work, and/or a customer's need for the physical inspection.

2.4.4 Negotiation of Sequence/Encounter Closure

One element for the delivery of a professional service is the appropriate timing and manner of closing the service-assessment sequence. In most cases, the closure of a service-assessment sequence is immediately followed by a sequence that terminates the whole session, unless the service-assessment sequence becomes a session-closing

sequence itself. While there may be some variations across languages and cultures (see Pavlidou 1997; 2002), the negotiation of closure is a significant and sensitive issue during human interaction because “how speakers leave one another may be a resource for their further interactions” (Button, 1987, p. 148). This is especially so for the delivery of professional services, where the encounter is to be closed upon the production of a successful outcome (i.e., a satisfactory new cut) and thus promoting the ratio of repeat customers.

Logically speaking, a sequence is composed of an FPP, SPP, and a Sequence Closing Third (SCT), but service-assessment sequences are rarely composed in such a clear-cut way. One reason is the participants’ constant monitoring of each other’s behavior, which may lead to an expansion of the service-assessment sequence. Research has shown that people negotiate closure via pre-closing actions, for example by using verbal practices such as “Well” and “OK” (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). People may also refer to some accounts for closing, such as referring to others’ interests (e.g., “I shall get you back to your movie.”) (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973, pp. 303-6). Or, they may show appreciation (e.g., “Thank you for your time”) and inaccessibility (e.g., “I have to go meet someone”) to signal their leave-taking (Knapp, Hart et al., 1973). Alternatively, Antaki (2002) examines the use of “high-grade assessments” (e.g., “lovely” and “brilliant”) in closing sequences of telephone conversations. His analysis also reveals that people employ this particular type of assessment to move the conversation towards closing. In institutional settings, the process of pre-closing may take a particular form. Robinson (2001) found several steps that physicians and patients go through for an accomplishment of satisfactory closure of their consultations. The steps include “arrangement sequence,” often indexing future arrangements that require patients’ acceptance, as well as “the final concern business-preclosing sequence,” which makes

patients' yes/no answers relevant. Therefore, the pre-closing phase generates the room for the participants with an appropriate place to determine when to close the sequence, which in turn becomes an effective negotiation of closing and satisfactory end to a professional encounter.

When these pre-closing actions (i.e., a proposal for closure) are aligned and accepted by other participants, a sequence is brought to a closure. That is, closings are the interlocutors' collaborations and are interactionally achieved by "speakers' 'negotiations' with one another for continuation or closure" (Button, 1987, p. 148). When others do not align with one's pre-closing actions, therefore, a sequence continues. For instance, a stylist sometimes post-expands the service-assessment sequence without any verbal account for it, after a customer provides a pre-closing action (e.g., saying "Okay, thank you"). Yet, why does this mismatched adjacency pair take place? Plausible explanations for such "inconsistent" communicative actions may be found by examining more than just verbal actions, but also other vocal and embodied actions people use to propose conversation closure.

For instance, Auer, Couper-Kuhlen, and Muller (1999) considered the manipulation of rhythm and tempo as a crucial element of successful telephone conversational closings. Goodwin and Goodwin (1987) found that assessments with gaze withdrawal⁶ and reduced volume may propose a topic closure (e.g., "It was so good"). According to them, when such vocal actions are made by the first speaker, the second speaker provides an assessment that upgrades the previous assessment (e.g., "Oh, that'd be fantastic.") but with "drastically reduced volume," aligning with the first speaker's proposal of topic closure (p. 40). LeBaron and Jones (2002), on the other hand,

⁶ Knapp and Hart (1973) also recognize the use of gaze withdrawal as a way of demonstrating inaccessibility and thus initiation in closing.

demonstrated that the mechanism of a closing may be shaped largely by the material contexts of interactions. Their single-case-analysis of an unexpected reunion between two women at a beauty salon showed that participants use multiple local resources for the closure of a reunion, such as grabbing a handbag to indicate a departure. They also witnessed that one of the two women employed a third person (the hairstylist) as a resource to conclude the reunion. These researchers showed the significance of the multimodal analysis of interaction, especially during one of the more sensitive moments: the negotiation of closure.

Likewise, the present study aims to look at multimodal resources used in negotiating closure. Stylists may expand or reopen a service-assessment sequence despite a client's upgraded agreement. On the other hand, a stylist may close the sequence despite a customer's dispreferred response (e.g., a delayed, weak agreement). Thus, there are several situations in which we cannot explain the relevance of some actions without looking at multiple modalities. This is especially significant in beauty salon interactions, where closure of the service-assessment sequence requires the completion of both talk and physical inspection.

Indeed, analysis of multimodal communication is appropriate for exploring any face-to-face interaction. The current section has surveyed the research of interaction that had direct relevance on the present study of the service-assessment sequence: sequence organization, assessment, agreement/disagreement, preference, and sequence closure. However, few of them touched upon bodily actions that may contribute to the organization of sequence and the performance of speech acts like making assessments, agreeing, and disagreeing. Before ending the chapter, I survey a body of work that focuses on multimodality.

2.5 MULTIMODALITY AND PROFESSIONAL WORK

While verbal means seemingly are the clearest way for stylists and clients to negotiate the quality of a service, the participants may do so through other communicative resources, including embodied actions such as glances, gestures, and shifts in posture, in addition to vocal actions. Merely examining one modality is not adequate for the analysis of face-to-face interaction, nor is it reasonable to establish a ‘verbal-nonverbal’ dichotomy. People, including young children (Lerner & Zimmerman, 2003), employ communicative resources such as gesture (e.g., Streeck, 1993; LeBaron, 1998; Goodwin, 2003; Kendon, 2004), gaze (e.g., Goodwin, 1980; Bavelas, Coates et al., 2002), and material artifacts (e.g., Goodwin, 1994; Streeck, 1996; Oshima, 2003) for accomplishing everyday communication. Thus, it is critical to be cognizant of the various resources available for social interaction (e.g., Finnegan, 2002) and take a multimodal approach to the study of social interaction (Streeck & Knapp, 1992; Jarmon, 1996; Jones & LeBaron, 2002; Kendon, 2004; Streeck & Mehus, 2005).

My investigation of interaction between hairstylists and clients in beauty-related professions must take into account more than one communication modality, since the evaluation of the service is to a great extent based on *both* talk and the physical inspection of a new cut. While they engage in talk of the service-assessment sequence, the inspection of a service provided requires the participants to employ bodily actions for visually and physically examining the end product. The effective coordination of these multiple strands requires the participants’ ability to organize multiple communicative resources. To be precise, the extent of “professionalism” can be measured by one’s administration of various communicative resources in the service-assessment sequence.

Several studies of professional communication have focused on the interdependence of professional tasks and multimodality, demonstrating a holistic

understanding of communicative practices in the workplace. Take for instance LeBaron (1998) who studied the deployment of hand gestures for the accomplishment of architectural communication. He noted that during architecture talk, hand gestures are especially useful due to their communicative nature: “[g]estures are material signs that take shape and observably evolve along with the notions they represent” (p. 159). Similarly, Murphy (2005) looked at the use of gestures in a team of three architects and argued that along with talk and material objects (e.g., building drawings, scale models), gestures were coordinated for “collaborative imagining” of an unconstructed building. Often, learning experiences and the acquisition of professional skills are the result of multimodal interaction between an expert and a novice. Goodwin (1994) examined how archeological students learn to appropriately view work-related objects and understand activities through talk, gesture, and work-related objects. Likewise, a mundane working activity such as “looking at airplanes” requires the complex combination of different communicative resources (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1996).

Yet, what separates the present study from these studies are dissimilar institutional characteristics. The aforementioned studies focus on communication *among* professionals (at times including students of certain professions). A similar perspective is seen in the studies of “sociotechnical work settings” (Nevile, 2004), where the completion of a task is grounded in people’s simultaneous employment of talk and bodily motions. Kleifgen (2001) demonstrated how two men time their talk with various components surrounding a computerized machine in order to professionally fix the machine problem. Correspondingly, Nevile (2004) examined how pilots organize speech and embodied actions (e.g., writing, touching displays) in the effective manner during an approach briefing. Other studies focused on participants’ multimodal activities in science-related activities such as: a high school physics lab (Ford, 1999), the scientific

practice of cognitive neuroscientists (Alač, 2005), and discussions in a biochemistry lab (Becvar, Hollan et al., 2005). Other professional groups, such as business people, actively employ different communicative tools including gestures, material objects (Streeck, 1996), and inscriptions (Streeck & Kallmeyer, 2001) during business meetings in the service of shared understanding. These studies have demonstrated how *groups of* professionals coordinate different communication modalities for organizing institutional activities. Accordingly, their focus on multimodality often centers on the collaborative tasks, such as an achievement of shared understanding/perspective and an effective organization of physical professional tasks.

While the present study also looks at how the participants use different communicative resources in achieving the delivery of professional service, it also takes into consideration the arrangement of different kinds of communicative tasks, such as the successful negotiation of the evaluation of the service, emotional work, and providing professional knowledge and opinions. Therefore, this present study also focuses on how people employ multiple communicative resources in the service of balancing these tasks in a professional and compassionate manner – in the unique setting of stylist-client interaction. Furthermore, the distinctive characteristic of the service-assessment sequence – talk and physical inspection must be completed in unison – allows me to approach the study of multimodal communication from a rather new perspective: exploring the intricate relationship of talk and action, which has not been explicitly stated among the body of multimodal analysis despite its recent growth. In the next chapter, I provide a description of the research sites and participants, and an explanation of the methodology used to collect and analyze the data.

Chapter 3. Methodology

3.0 INTRODUCTION

The present study examines how stylists and customers come to an agreement about the quality of the service provided, thereby achieving satisfactory closure of the service encounter. For the purpose of the study, I conduct a micro-analytical investigation of “naturally occurring talk-in-interaction” (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998; Ten Have, 1999). “After-the-fact” assessments, such as seen in interviews and surveys, are not appropriate for this study because they do not demonstrate *how* participants make such evaluations of the service. Instead, the examination of actual, natural interactions allows me to conduct a precise, moment-by-moment analysis of what co-participants do towards the accomplishment of a “professional” outcome. In what follows, I provide the details of the methodology used for the present study and the process of analyzing the service-assessment sequence.

3.1 DATA COLLECTION AND VIDEOTAPED INTERACTIONS

For the adequate observation and analysis of interactions, recorded data is crucial. It allows capturing any subtle vocal utterances and visible actions employed by, and available to, participants in this study; what is more, “[t]he availability of a taped record enables repeated and detailed examination of particular events in interaction and hence greatly enhances the range and precision of the observations that can be made” (Heritage & Atkinson, 1984, p. 4). I exploit such benefits of recorded data by capturing the exact timing of, and describing, the verbal and bodily actions and practices that participants make and orient to. The video/audio recordings also capture how the observed actions are

associated with their physical environments (Ten Have, 1999, p. 52). Videotaping is a central aspect of my study because it visually captures two distinctive and unique features found in the settings of beauty salons: 1) the participants' use of mirrors to interact; and 2) the participants' interaction with one another through the seeing, touching, and feeling of hair. In a hair salon, participants manipulate objects (e.g., hand-held mirrors) as well as their own – or each other's – bodies (e.g., touching hair and using gestures).

After receiving IRB approval on October 27, 2005⁷, I began the data collection process in Austin, Texas, and accumulated more data in the following spring and summer of 2006. I also collected data during the summer of 2007 in various cities in Gumma Prefecture, Japan. During this time, I approached participants through an informal, yet effective, network of friends and acquaintances (often through customers, and occasionally through stylists directly) and obtained their consent either in written form or orally.⁸

Each session is videotaped in its entirety. Some sessions finished within 30 minutes, but others took as long as three hours (e.g., for coloring and/or perms). In general, a session begins with an exchange of greetings between the stylist and the customer, followed by a consulting session. The stylist frequently initiates a consulting session by asking for the customer's purpose of the visit. In some cases, this progressed rather quickly, taking less than a minute, such as when a customer clearly knew what s/he wanted (e.g., "cut an inch, keep the same style" "just trim the bangs") and/or when the participants had a history of several sessions (e.g., "the same cut as always."). Other times, participants discussed the client's desires by brainstorming to find the best haircut

⁷ The first IRB was approved for a class project. I made an additional application the following year (2006) for conducting the data collection for the purpose of a dissertation.

⁸ While I collected written consent forms from the participants in the States, I collected mostly oral consent forms in Japan, where people are rather not used to and hesitant to provide their signatures on paper.

for the client, and/or occasionally communicated visually with an aid of pictorial images (e.g., magazines, gestures). Most sessions included a hair wash prior to the actual haircutting session, but this part was often skipped at in-and-out, low-cost types of hair salons. Also, depending on the nature of the service provided, shampooing was appropriately carried out after the cutting was done, or after a perm was provided. Service-assessment sequences were sometimes found in the middle of a haircutting session, such as when a stylist moved from cutting one area of the head to another. Also, a stylist may initiate service-assessment after the cutting session but before drying and styling the cut. Always, the entire session is closed by a service-assessment sequence, even when the participants have already gone through a few of them during the cutting, and/or styling session.

Although my main phenomena of analytical interest were frequently found in the later parts of the sessions, where participants negotiated the quality of the service that has been provided (which at times, only took a minute), I found recording the entire session highly valuable. Recording each session in its entirety was necessary for two reasons: 1) the need for access to the overall circumstance of a session (e.g., participants may go through an observable communication problem that may later influence the shape of, or provide additional accounting for the analysis of, the service-assessment sequence); and 2) the need to document service-assessment sequences which may occur in the middle of the sessions (e.g., participants judging the length of bangs that have been cut before moving on to the task of haircutting or styling another area of the cut).

However, video data collection in beauty salons was not without its challenges. In all cases, I used a mini DV camera along with a separate microphone⁹ to obtain better sound quality. Beauty salons are by nature, very noisy environments full of commotion

⁹ I used a microphone called “table microphone” that is set on a flat surface.

and distractions. In addition to sounds from a TV set or radio/stereo (which were often lowered for recording purposes), the presence of other customers, their children, and other employees often created additional acoustical noise (talk, hairdryer usage, etc.). Furthermore, the camera needed to be positioned behind the participants in several instances, which made it more difficult to capture the whole of their conversations. For these reasons, the use of a separate microphone proved to be invaluable. Unfortunately, table microphones were not readily available for filming in Japan. To offset the issue, I visited salons only during off-peak hours, and requested that the volume of ambient music and television be lowered.

In regards to the video collection itself, I also used tripods whenever possible, capturing both stylist and customer, as well as their talk and their bodily actions, either from a rear 3/4 view (recording participants through the standard large mirror in front of them) or directly from the side. On occasion, I would have to take the camera off of its tripod to record the participants from the front. As the videographer, I briefly explained to each participant about the purpose of the recording – that I was looking at professional communication at beauty salons –, and would try to capture each session before any communication between stylist and client would begin.

One frequently raised concern regarding videotaped data is that participants may alter their behavior due to their attention to the video camera. A few participants had made comments about the presence of a camera or acted a little reserved towards the beginning of their session. However, I also witnessed that those who were at first hesitant about the presence of the camera ultimately seemed fully unaware of it by the time they reached a service-assessment sequence of any kind. In addition, I had already established good relationships with a majority of the participants, which helped to create a more relaxed, natural, and typical behavior. Thus, most of the participants showed little or no

obvious realization of the presence of the video camera during the recording of haircutting sessions.

3.2 RESEARCH SITES AND PARTICIPANTS

The major set of data comes from: 1) 30 sessions at 10 beauty salons in Austin, TX (where the researcher currently resides); and 2) 30 sessions at 9 beauty salons in Gumma prefecture in Japan (the researcher's hometown). The collected data includes interactions conducted in English (in the U.S.) and in Japanese (both U.S. and Japan)). Of the data gathered in the U.S. include these participants: 12 Japanese; 3 Asian Americans; 11 Caucasian Americans; and 2 Hispanic Americans. Five of the participants are male customers, and the age range is between 18 and 50. The data gathered in Japan includes 27 Japanese and 1 Asian American. Among them, there are four male stylists and one male customer. Age is quite diverse, with a range between 5 and 85 years of age. Interactions included a range of long-term customers, first-time-visitors, and second- or third-time-visitors. I have known most of the participating customers personally (as well as one of the stylists) prior to data collection. Such information (and any additional background information that I hold regarding participants) will be clearly stated as it becomes relevant in my analysis, especially if it has a direct impact on my analysis.

Each salon offers its own distinctive flair (which I allude to as needed in my analysis), but by and large, they share some general characteristics as well. As mentioned elsewhere (LeBaron & Jones, 2002; Jacobs-Huey, 2006), beauty salons often function as a venue for socializing, and likewise, the subjects in my data discussed their everyday lives and personal interests during a session. Socializing often transpired between hairstylist and customer, but also occurred among hairstylists themselves, and sometimes between stylist, customer, and assistant. The range of "off-work" topics may be

influenced by additional background factors such as: the number of previous visits (familiarity between participants); participants' ages and ethnicities; and particular common interests. The length and timing of socializing can also vary depending on environmental conditions and restrictions (e.g., another customer is waiting, the customer or stylist is behind schedule). Most frequently, stylists and customers socialized in the middle of the session, after the consultation but before the service-assessment sequence (during haircutting, coloring, curling for perm, etc.).

Another interesting common element of beauty salons is the manipulation and use of two mirrors at any given time by the participants: a large, fixed mirror towards the front of the participants and a hand-held mirror, usually set aside for evaluation or viewing of hard-to-see areas during the service-assessment sequence. The evaluation process utilizing two mirrors was common in all beauty salons I have visited.

3.3 DATA ANALYSIS: MICRO-ANALYTIC INVESTIGATION OF ACTUAL INTERACTION

In my study I draw from the traditions of both conversation analysis (CA) and microethnography. To begin with, while my study deviates from the conventional CA approach (which mainly focuses on talk), it still shares two basic tenets: 1) observing recorded natural interactions; and 2) collecting and examining sequences. Since I have already explained how natural interactions were recorded, I now clarify the latter: how I examined the collected sequences.

3.3.1 Service-Assessment Sequence

As I watched videotaped interactions, I identified the service-assessment sequence as the unit of analysis, which usually takes place towards the end of a cosmetological session and could be as quick as 30 seconds, or as long as 5 minutes. It also occurred in

the midst of the session when needed, for example, when a stylist and a customer discussed how the bangs have been cut before moving onto the next step of a haircut.

According to Schegloff (2007), sequence is “the vehicle for getting some activity accomplished,” and it is “the organization of courses of action enacted through turns-at-talk – coherent, orderly, meaningful successions or ‘sequences’ of actions or ‘moves’” (p. 2). Correspondingly, what I identified as the service-assessment sequence is an organization in which the action of service-assessment is enacted through the taking of turns and a number of successive actions.

Basically, a sequence is constituted with an adjacency pair: two turns adjacently placed (one after the other), such as question-answer, offer-acceptance, and exchange of greetings (Schegloff, 2007, p. 22). In the service-assessment sequence, the first pair is an invitation of a customer’s service-assessment, which is often produced through some actions of a stylist, such as providing a hand-held mirror, turning the chair, and/or asking a question or providing an explanation about the cut. In return, a customer completes a second pair part by making an assessment.

Sequences are frequently expanded, however. Schegloff (2007) explains that expansion happens in three possible places: pre-expansion (before first pair part), insert expansion (between first pair part and second pair part), and post-expansion (after second pair part). Similarly, the service-assessment sequence is not simply composed of a pair of actions, but is often constructed of additional, different types of “smaller” sequences. For example, a stylist may provide an explanation of the cut right before asking for a customer’s assessment (pre-expansion). Additional questioning by a stylist may follow a customer’s assessment (post-expansion). A stylist may provide an elaborated explanation of the cut or use different practices to invite a customer’s assessment, or a customer may ask questions about how to style the cut before providing an assessment (insert

expansion). Therefore, as Schegloff points out, “very long stretches of talk can be understood as elaborate structures built around a single underlying adjacency pair” (p. 27).

Schegloff (2007) distinguishes this underlying adjacency pair and the additional, expanded sequences by referring to the underlying adjacency pair as “the base pair.” Likewise, I name the fundamental adjacency pair of the service-assessment sequence (inviting an assessment – making an assessment) the *base pair*. In order to examine various forms of expansion – various types of actions that occur in small sequences – as well as how these expansions shape the base pair of the service-assessment sequence, I rely on the concepts of turn-taking, adjacency pair, repair, and preference organization. My analysis also hinges on CA’s distinction of “action” and “practice” and CA’s “next-turn-proof-procedure” for the practical aspects of my analysis.

3.3.2 Turn-taking Organization

Sequences are constructed by participants’ turns. Each turn is composed of turn constructional units (TCUs), which are mainly built from grammatical units (sentences, clauses, phrases, and lexical items), prosodic features of the talk, and the performance of a recognizable action in context. For the joint construction of a sequence, participants do not simply take turns. CA methodology suggests that co-participants in interaction constantly *monitor* each other’s turn to understand what action is being done through it. This inspection often facilitates the choice of the next appropriate action to take (Schegloff 2007, pp. 2-4).

In the service-assessment sequence, a proper monitoring of each participant’s turn is especially important because of the sensitive nature of the sequence. Customers tend to not show their dissatisfaction in an obvious manner, such as verbally providing a clear-

cut negative assessment. Instead, they may shape their behaviors in certain ways, such as remaining still, moving closer to the mirror, and/or delaying their assessment. Stylists, then, have to understand what customers may mean by these actions and coordinate their imminent actions in regards to that, for example by providing an explanation or modifying the original question (insert expansion). CA methodology allows me to analyze this turn-taking process on a micro-level and can lead me to uncover how participants negotiate the assessment sequence moment by moment.

Furthermore, a close look at turn-taking organization helps me explain the success of the service outcome. In my preliminary analysis, I found an example where a stylist attended to a customer's initial assessment alone. In spite of other vocal/embodied practices the customer employed along with her initial assessment (in this case, taking several seconds before responding, continually feeling through the hair, and persistently looking in the mirror during and after her utterance), the stylist closed the haircutting session. If the stylist oriented to *the way* the customer's turn was designed, post-expansion of the sequence with a different course of action (such as asking additional questions) might have been possible. Nonetheless, the stylist's next action was to initiate closure by taking the customer's haircutting gown. This session turned out to be unsuccessful, because the customer requested additional cutting after the next customer was finished.

In essence, the stylist's course of action in response to the customer's initial assessment within this particular case played a large role in labeling the new cut as "unsuccessful," consequently leading to multiple haircutting sessions, loss of time and energy to both parties, and possibly the loss of future business. By relying on the micro-examination of turn-taking organization, the present study reveals how customer and

stylist negotiate the service-assessment sequence and achieve satisfactory closure of the service encounter.

3.3.3 Adjacency Pair

As I have previously mentioned, adjacency pair is a basic type of sequence. According to Schegloff (2007), its features include: 1) composition in two turns; 2) by different speakers; 3) adjacently placed (one after the other). These two turns are: 4) relatively ordered (distinguished as first pair parts and second pair parts); and 5) pair-type related (question-answer, offer-acceptance, greeting-greeting, etc.) (pp. 13-14). A basic, unexpanded form of an adjacency pair operates as follows: “given the recognizable production of a first pair part, on its first possible completion its speaker should stop and a next speaker should start and produce a second pair part from the pair type of which the first is recognizably a member” (Schegloff & Sacks 1973, p. 296). For example, a co-worker says “thank you” and you say “you’re welcome,” or you say “good night” and likewise, so does your friend. By simply mirroring the first speaker’s greeting, the second speaker can show three things: 1) the first speaker’s turn was completed; 2) the greeting was heard as being addressed to the second speaker; and 3) the first speaker’s action was taken as a greeting.

The service-assessment sequence is built upon a base pair (invitation for an assessment – making an assessment), and its enactment may be done through question-answer (“Does it look okay?” “Yeah, I like it.”), assessment-agreement (“I like it” “I like it, too.”), or request-assessment (“Feel through your hair and tell me if it feels thin enough.” “Yeah it is.”). However, this base pair may be enacted in more complicated ways, because particular verbal and embodied practices of a hairstylist, which may serve for different means in general (or in other sequences in the haircutting activity) can

function to invite a customer's service-assessment. For example, providing an explanation of a new cut, fixing it, and telling a customer to look at the mirror, may function as a particular type of first pair part (inviting an assessment) to be followed by a customer's assessment regarding the new cut.

Noticing these adjacency pairs helps to explain possible problematic moments found in the service-assessment sequence. For example, when a stylist hands a hand-held mirror to a customer, saying "I will show you the back" and turns the chair, a customer should show his/her understanding of the stylist's action by making an assessment on the back of the cut, using the hand-held mirror and larger wall mirror in tandem. On the other hand, when the second pair part is not appropriately produced, for instance when the customer simply stares at the mirror (instead of producing some vocal and/or other embodied actions), the stylist may insert an expansion; s/he may rework his/her first pair part by providing an explanation of the cut, fixing the back of the customer's hairdo, and so on.

In addition to the base pair, there are other adjacency pairs which expand the service-assessment sequence. The service-assessment sequence may be expanded when a customer says, along with his/her assessment, "I like it, thank you." In general, the utterance "Thank you" is followed by acts of acceptance, such as "You're welcome" and "No problem." Likewise, in my initial data collection, I often observed service-assessment sequences that closed via an appreciative adjacency pair or an exchange of gratitude (e.g., "I like it, thank you." "Thank you, that's great."). However, I also observed a case in which a stylist responded to a customer's "Thank you" with another type of action, such as questioning (e.g., "Are you sure you like it?" "Is the length okay?"). Then, the base pair may be elaborated by a long post-expansion.

Therefore, using the concept of adjacency pairs, I identify possible “problematic” moments of the sequence and question why participants chose to take certain actions instead of properly fulfilling the second pair part. By doing so, I further examine *how* the first pair part was constructed, how it affected the way the second pair part was produced, and what happens as an outcome of an adjacency pair break down. For instance, a pursuit of customer’s satisfaction may override the principle of the adjacency pair, and the conduct of physical inspection may also break the adjacency pair.

3.3.4 Repair Organization

Repair is defined as “organized ways of dealing with various kinds of *trouble* in the interaction’s progress, such as problems of (mis)hearing or understanding” (Ten Have, 1999, p. 116). “Repair” usually configures two sequential actions: the initiation of repair; and the repair itself. Repair initiation can be done by the speaker of the trouble source, which is referred to as “self-initiated repair,” or it can be done by someone other than the initial speaker, i.e., “other-initiated repair.” In addition to the repair initiation, the repair itself may be completed by the speaker, “self-repair,” or by others, “other-repair.” According to Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sacks (1977), there is a preference for self-repair. Whether the repair is initiated by self or others, people generally prefer self-repair over other-repair. Self-initiated self-repair is often achieved within the same turn as the trouble source (e.g., a speaker may cut off his/her own words and restart a sentence). On the other hand, when others initiate repair, it is usually done in the next turn. Thus, other-initiated self-repair completes a sequence, the first pair part being the initiation that asks for a repair (e.g., a recipient saying, “huh?” or “I can’t hear you”), and the second pair part being the repair provided by the original speaker (Schegloff, 2007, p. 101).

While people conduct repair to fix troubles or problems in speaking, hearing, or understanding the talk, there is no need for the occurrence of actual *trouble* sources for people to engage in repair. People also do other things with repair. I found that the majority of repair sequences in my data do not necessarily take place to fix a misunderstanding or mishearing but to minimize the likelihood of a customer's negative assessment of the service. For example, as a hairstylist starts her questioning, she may observe a customer's reaction to the new haircut (e.g., the customer shifts her posture and brings herself closer to the mirror). Upon seeing this, the stylist may repair the incomplete sentence in order to orient to this action of the customer (e.g., while seeking an assessment, the stylist says, "Is it-, I didn't cut much, really."). Any observable vocal/embodied practices that customers engage in can give an opportunity for stylists to repair his/her original utterance and/or bodily action. Accordingly, the examination of repair phenomena may help to explain insert expansions and post-expansions of the base pair: situations in which a stylist re-opens the haircutting session, re-styles the hair, or paraphrases an explanation that s/he just gave about the new cut.

3.3.5 Preference Organization

As I have noted earlier, participants have many courses of action to choose from (e.g., questioning, explaining, agreeing/disagreeing) as well as many ways of designing each action in the service-assessment sequence. This choice can be explained by the concept of preference organization, which is explained by Ten Have (1999) as:

The general idea is: (1) that, when alternative actions are open possibilities, one may be 'preferred', that is, expected and chosen if possible; and (2) that the

difference between ‘preferred’ and ‘dispreferred’ alternatives is demonstrated in the *turn shape* chosen for doing one or the other. In other words, turns can be designed to *show* they are doing the preferred, or the dispreferred, alternative action (p. 120).

Since Sacks (1987) originally developed the concept, many scholars have conducted studies of how people accomplish preferred/dispreferred actions in interaction (see pp. 32-37 in Chapter 2 for a detailed literature review regarding preference organization). My data analysis also benefits immensely from the application of the concept of preference organization.

In the service-assessment sequence, preferred actions mostly include agreeing and displaying satisfaction. The present study examines the practices and actions that participants employ and attend to in order to perform these preferred actions. The observation may include how a customer shapes his/her answer to a hairstylist’s question, “Do you like it?” with a preferred action: providing a positive assessment (e.g., saying “Yes, I like it.”). I also look at how a stylist produces the first pair part in order “to maximize the occurrence of a sequence with a preferred second pair part” (Schegloff, 2007, p. 81), which can be done through pre-expansion and insert expansion (e.g., providing an explanation of the new hairstyle, modifying questions, etc.).

Nonetheless, participants also have to deal with dispreferred actions at times, such as disagreeing, showing dissatisfaction with the new haircut and/or desire to revise particular aspects of the haircut. These actions are often avoided in the service-assessment sequence due to the possible risks that they may entail: confronting conflict, threatening professional identity, and keeping the sequence from advancing. Chapter 7 specifically looks at such “difficult” scenarios and studies the various practices that participants employ when performing similar, demanding actions. I rely on Pomerantz’

findings on preferred and dispreferred turn shapes (1984) and carefully look at overlap, pause, mitigation, and elaboration in participants' turns, among other phenomena.

3.3.6 Action and Practice

Up to this point I have often used the terms “action” and “practice.” In regards to the actions of participants, the difference between “action” and “practice” becomes salient, and for the purpose of the present study, it is important to clarify this distinction. Schegloff (2007) introduces the distinction, explaining that an action can be accomplished through different practices (p. 8). For example, a greeting – an action – can be achieved via practices such as saying hi, waving a hand, smiling, etc.

In the same manner, I have collected a number of vocal and embodied practices that people employ and orient to as a means of performing various actions, namely actions such as agreeing/disagreeing. The present study questions if the same practices are always employed for- and oriented to- as the same actions, and if not, then is it the case that “the co-participants failed to understand correctly what the speaker was doing or, at least, that they acted as if they failed to understand it” (Schegloff, 2007, p. 8). Asking these questions helps me explore many expansions within the service-assessment sequence that shape it as a whole. In addition, a detailed investigation of different practices allows me to capture cross-cultural differences seen in the shape of the service-assessment sequence. For example, Japanese participants may use a different practice (e.g., nodding) from that of American participants (e.g., saying “I really, really like it!”) for the same action (e.g., showing satisfaction). Chapter 6 gives a profound look into Japanese participants' use of head nods.

3.3.7 Next-turn-proof-procedure

Above I have explained a few fundamental concepts of CA that are relevant to my study. For a precise application of these concepts, one must examine “what comes after.” Conversation analysts must not try to look into participants’ intentions or minds, but instead focus on their *observable* behaviors (Silverman, 1998). With this principle in mind, I do not set apart any particular practice or action for analysis but rather, I look at how certain practices or actions are attended to by other participants. To do so, I describe and examine sequences by relying on the “next-turn-proof-procedure”:

Throughout the course of a conversation or other bout of talk-in-interaction, speakers display in their sequentially next turns an understanding of what the prior turn was about. That understanding may turn out to be what the prior speaker intended, or not; whichever it is, that itself is something which gets displayed in the next turn in the sequence. We describe this as a next-turn-proof-procedure, and it is the most basic tool used in CA to ensure that analyses explicate the orderly properties of talk as oriented-to accomplishments of participants, rather than being based merely on the assumptions of the analyst (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998, p. 15).

The next-turn-proof-procedure is crucial in my analysis of beauty salon interactions. For example, I do not consider a customer’s actions alone (e.g., a prolonged look into a hand-held mirror) as “a display of (dis)satisfaction.” Rather, I contemplate what action a hairstylist provides in response to the customer’s action, as well as what follows. Similarly, even if a customer verbally displays his/her satisfaction, and possibly initiates the closing of the assessment sequence by saying, “I like it, thank you”, I would not conclude that it is a sign of a successful outcome, but instead look at what comes next. Does a hairstylist move on to the next sequence (e.g., clearing up the workplace)? Or does s/he expand the sequence, by asking additional questions about the haircut or providing explanations about the cut? Only then, could I argue what is (un)accomplished

through these actions and study the specific orders that shape the service-assessment sequence.

As described above, CA methodology plays a fundamental role in pursuing my research questions. However, unlike the majority of CA studies, which study conversation by focusing mainly on spoken construction units¹⁰, I study actions and their enactment through linguistic and embodied practices. In examining a physical activity such as haircutting, it is nearly impossible to separately scrutinize talk and bodily actions for an understanding of what is occurring. Instead, I must look at how physical actions and talk in the haircutting activity are coordinated to communicate dis/satisfaction and negotiate the quality of a service. Additionally, while the present study follows CA by building collections of sequences (Heritage, 1995), its focus is not simply to depict the particular set of practices (e.g., different functions of a specific utterance). By and large, CA “proceeds via the collecting of recurrent phenomena (e.g., utterance formats) across ranges of contexts to establish their recurrent functions (“doings”)” (Streeck & Mehus, 2005, p. 382). Rather, the present study aims to explore how people conduct certain actions through those practices in a specific context of professional haircutting. To help me build upon this, I incorporate a microethnographic methodology.

3.4 MICROETHNOGRAPHY

Streeck and Mehus (2005) define microethnography as “the microscopic analysis of naturally occurring human activities and interactions” (p. 381). Microethnography, which has its roots in an intensive observation of classroom interactions (Mehan, 1998), is also known as ethnographic analysis (Erickson, 1995). Microethnographers view

¹⁰ CA’s main focus lies in the examinations of four types of spoken construction units—words, phrases, clauses, and sentences (Sacks, Schegloff et al., 1974).

activities as the central unit of analysis (Streeck & Mehus, 2005), which is what I draw from for the present study. My analysis led to the discovery of some recurrent vocal and bodily practices that participants employ to perform certain actions. However, just like one action can be done through different practices, one practice also functions to perform different actions. Thus, the analysis should not be concluded by understanding that a hairstylist treats a customer's prolonged look at a mirror as a display of not having finished with a new haircut evaluation. Instead, the present study aims to fully describe a haircutting activity and similar cosmetological services through looking at particular action-sequences (namely, the service-assessment sequence), obtaining a better understanding of the role of communication played in professionalism and the professionalization of beauty-related services.

Additionally, I incorporate physical actions in my sequential analysis, as proposed by microethnographers. Recent studies in microethnography expressed “[t]he importance of the material setting as a *resource* and *medium* of interaction and sense making” and that “[w]e not only communicate with our voices and bodies but also with material objects” (Streeck & Mehus, 2005, p. 389). Similarly, I examine talk, bodily movements, and interactions with material objects. This is crucial to my study because, as mentioned in Chapter 2, the activity of haircutting by nature requires participants' multimodal interaction, including constant interactions with/through mirrors.

The emphasis on multimodal communication reveals structures of actions that might otherwise be overlooked. At the same time, it requires critical decisions in the process of conducting research. Quite a number of researchers have developed techniques of analyzing multimodal interaction (Heath, 1997; Goodwin, 2000; Stivers & Sidnell, 2005), and Goodwin's instructions (2000) appear to be the most applicable to the case

under consideration. Below, I summarize a few guidelines that hold particular relevance to the present study:

- Visual events should not be examined in isolation. Rather, we should focus on “the systematic practices used by participants in interaction to achieve courses of collaborative action with each other” (Goodwin, 2000, p. 160).
- Analysts should not provide their own insights on certain visible events, but instead demonstrate participants’ active employment of, and orientations to, visual events for the constitution of the communicative activity that they engage in (p. 160).
- For the maximum accessibility of visible actions to the reader, transcripts and other possible media use are crucial. Goodwin has “experimented with using transcription symbols, frame grabs, diagrams, and movies embedded in electronic versions of papers” (p. 161)¹¹.

This last point draws attention to another crucial element of my data analysis: transcribing. In order to successfully approach my study, I make meticulous and precise transcripts of the videotaped data. Lastly, I briefly describe the procedure of transcribing and how I have made the most of transcripts and captured video.

3.5 TRANSCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Transcribing is a crucial analytical tool for the study of recorded interactions; “it provides the researcher with a way of noticing, even discovering, particular events, and helps focus analytic attention on their socio-interactional organization” (Heath & Luff, 1993, p. 309). Since my primary focus is on the service-assessment sequence, I mainly

¹¹ Jarmon (1996) distributed her dissertation in the CD-ROM format, which allowed the reader to access not only the text but also the movies at the same time.

transcribed the identified sequences rather than entire sessions. I used the system developed by Gail Jefferson (see Sacks, Schegloff et al., 1974), as well as transcription conventions provided by Goodwin (2000):

Talk receiving some form of emphasis is marked with underlining or ***bold italics***. Punctuation is used to transcribe intonation: A period indicates falling pitch, a question mark rising pitch, and a comma a falling contour, as would be found for example after a non-terminal item in a list. A colon indicates lengthening of the current sound. A dash marks the sudden cut-off of the current sound (in English it is frequently realized as glottal stop). .. Numbers within single parentheses mark silences in seconds and tenths of a second. A degree sign (°) indicates that the talk that follows is being spoken with low volume. Left brackets connecting talk by different speakers mark the point where overlap begins (p. 158).

I included selected descriptions of visible actions in Times Roman Italic typeface, set within double parentheses on the line below the corresponding line of talk. Transcripts of Japanese data contain transliteration *and* an English translation immediately below the original, line-by-line. The inclusion of transliteration is significant for the present study because it allows documenting the exact timing of verbal features and bodily movements. It also captures the exact words on which an overlap may occur. Without such precision, multimodal interaction and/or interaction in other languages cannot be fully analyzed on a micro-level.

After, or occasionally during the process of, transcribing all assessment sequences, I observed how turn-taking, repair, and preference were organized in each sequence, in the way I described at the beginning of this section. As I made observations and found interactional patterns in some data, I went back to other data to observe similarities and/or differences. Finding similarities (i.e., a pattern) revealed a local interactional order, but noticing and describing a “deviant case” (Heritage, 1984) also strengthened my observations to locate and explain problematic moments in interaction. Revisiting our previous example case, a successful adjacency pair can occur in the

exchange of turns when a customer says, “I like it, thank you”, and a hairstylist fills the next slot by saying, “You’re welcome.” However, in a different set of data, the same hairstylist said, “Is the length okay?” instead of responding to the customer’s previous action (thanking the stylist and initiating closure). Upon finding cases such as this one, I made careful observations of this alternative turn chosen by the hairstylist, and made maximum use of the corpus of data by frequently referring back to find similar cases. During this process, I categorized the data into several cases according to the points of similarities, such as “managing disagreements,” “expanded sequences,” “smooth progress without noticeable issues,” and so on. I then further examined them, combining and at times omitting some of them, to build a structure of the empirical chapters. The next four chapters present analyses of the communicative practices employed by stylists and clients in the service-assessment sequence. In Chapter 4, I present an interesting case of multiple Second Pair Parts that are employed by customers. Chapter 5 also demonstrates several ways for coordinating talk and physical inspection, but I do so by analyzing sequence closure. In Chapter 6, I shift my focus to head nods, which happened to be habitually found in the majority of Japanese service-assessment sequences. Chapter 7 touches upon the problematic moments of requesting and making a revision to the new cut during the service-assessment sequence.

Chapter 4. Multiple Second Pair Parts: The Coordination of Multiple Strands in the Service-Assessment Sequence

4.0. INTRODUCTION

The most basic action sequence in talk in interaction is the adjacency pair: two turns adjacently placed (one after the other), such as question-answer, offer-acceptance, and exchange of greetings (Schegloff 2007, p. 22). In the service-assessment sequence, the first pair part (FPP) is the stylist's invitation to the customer to assess the service, such as asking a question and/or providing an explanation about the cut. In return, a customer completes the sequence by producing the second pair part (SPP), i.e. making an assessment. A sequence is frequently expanded through a minimal post-expansion after the SPP, which is designed "to move for, or to propose, sequence closing" (Schegloff, p. 118). This turn is referred to as a "sequence-closing third" (SCT), and may take various forms such as acknowledgements (e.g., "oh", "okay"), and/or assessments (e.g., "good", "perfect"), as well as repeats of the second pair part turn (Schegloff, p. 118-127). Thus, the basic organization of the service-assessment sequence looks like this:

[1] Sandy & Tia ("Sandy & Tia" 02:41-02:46)

FPP→ 1	Tia: >Does that look oka <u>y</u> ?<
SPP→ 2	Sand: [Oka:y, >Yea!<
SCT→ 3	Tia: Alright. Awesome.

However, most of the time, sequences are not this simple. The service-assessment sequence has two aspects: 1) talk (i.e., the verbal sequence); and 2) the physical

inspection of the service provided. I refer to these two main aspects as “strands.” Managing these two different “strands” may result in a unique shaping of the sequence, as seen in the following example:

[2-A] Amy’s 2 SPPs (“Amy & Hanh” 00:15-00:21)

```
FPP→ 1      Hanh: You like it?=  
SPP→ 2      Amy: =>Um-hmm.<  
      3      (3.8) ((Amy continues feeling though her hair, smiling,  
                  while Hanh stands further back. Amy gives a chuckle,  
                  and then slightly shifts her posture to the right.))  
SPP→ 4      Amy: Yeah!=  
SCT→ 5      Hanh: =Yeah?
```

As Hanh hands a hand-held mirror to Amy, she provides the FPP, asking Amy whether she likes the cut or not. In response, Amy provides two SPPs in lines 2 and 4. Interestingly, Hanh withholds the sequence closing third (SCT) until Amy produces the *second* SPP. Yet why are there two SPPs? Are they both necessary?

In what follows, I will examine several instances of multiple SPPs and demonstrate that they are in fact the result of the participants’ systematic coordination of the multiple strands. Subsequently, I will provide a few cases in which the participant does not attend to the second SPP. While they are “deviant” cases, examining them validates the analysis of the former examples; multiple SPPs are the result of the participants’ systematic coordination of talk and physical inspection of the new haircut, and sensitivity to the production of negative feedback on the client’s part.

4.1 THE PARTICIPANTS' PROFESSIONAL WORK IN PRODUCING THE MULTIPLE SPPS

Like many stylists who polish their professional skills over numerous service sessions, customers may also become familiar with the session routine and more skillful at managing the role of “the customer.” At times, the professionalism of the customer is demonstrated in his/her multiple SPPs. The following segment is a service-assessment sequence of the stylist, Tomo, and his regular customer, Leia. Every couple of months, they go through a familiar, 2-3 hour session of getting a perm, coloring, and trimming, which is what they did on the day that this data was taken. Having gone through a majority of the session, Tomo then spins Leia’s chair around, 180 degrees, to face backwards from the mirror. He then positions a hand-held mirror in front of Leia so that she could view the back of her hair through the use of two mirrors (Figure 1). This data was collected in a beauty salon in Japan, where it is common that the stylist holds the hand-held mirror for the customer¹². In responding to Tomo’s assessment, Leia provides several utterances of “yes.”

¹² The impact of this ethnographic feature upon the shape of the service-assessment sequence will be further examined in Chapter 6.


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6      (0.6) ((Leia looks up at Tomo))

7      Tomo: >Daijyoubu?<=
           (Is it) Okay?
           |
           ((Tomo smiles, lightly nods,
             and shifts gaze from the large mirror to Leia))

8      Leia: =Daijyobu.
           Okay.
           └───┘
           ((Leia and Tomo simultaneously nod. Leia faintly smiles))

9      Tomo: Ha::i. ((Tomo puts away the portable mirror))
           Yes.

```

By saying “Kon na kanji (it looks like this),” Tomo activates a sequence, requiring some type of SPP from Leia, such as an acknowledgement, agreement, and/or comment on the new cut. On the other hand, his embodied actions – holding the portable mirror for Leia and looking at the back of her hair in the large mirror – indicate the physical evaluation yet to come. Therefore, his verbal and embodied actions make multiple actions conditionally relevant next, which also belong to multiple strands: talk and physical inspection.

As soon as Tomo positions the portable mirror for Leia, she begins inspecting the cut by looking at it through two mirrors and shaking her head from right to left (lines 1-5). In doing so, she provides the first “yes” (line 3), followed by a micropause and repetitive “yes” (line 4). While producing these utterances, her gaze is fixed to the hand-held mirror, and she continues to turn head. She produces another SPP as she completes the physical inspection; this time she leans back on the chair (line 5) and shifts her gaze from the mirror to Tomo (line 6). These actions are followed by Tomo’s gaze shift to Leia and initiation of the base sequence (lines 7-9).

One apparent difference between these multiple SPPs is that the final one is made *upon* the completion of the physical inspection whereas the other ones are made as it is

going on. The response to Tomo's assessment concerns the quality of the service, which is likely to be provided upon completion of the physical inspection. Thus, one course of action Leia could take would be to suspend the talk until she completes the physical inspection of the cut. In other words, her very last SPP in line 5, which was made upon the completion of the physical inspection, could have functioned as the SPP by itself. What, then, are the functions of the other SPPs?

I argue that the plausible explanation for Leia's multiple SPPs comes from her orientation to the preference for agreement. Pomerantz (1984) argues that a participant's degree of agreement or disagreement with a previous assessment (made by another speaker) is displayed by the way s/he designs his/her actions. There are a number of tactics to design preferred actions (see pp. 32-37 and 56-58 of this dissertation), and fundamentally, we design preferred actions through a minimized gap between FPP and SPP. Conversely, delayed and/or hedged responses are considered performing dispreferred actions (Pomerantz, 1984). Thus, waiting to verbalize her satisfaction until she finishes the physical inspection contradicts the notion of the preference for agreement; missing the *first* SPP can indicate the upcoming disagreement. Accordingly, by providing an immediate SPP, Leia can prevent the pre-monitoring of upcoming disagreement. Therefore, Leia's *first* SPP is the consequence of her orientation to the preferred reaction to Tomo's utterance.

However, this immediate response does not make a satisfactory SPP by itself, because what validates the SPP is the physical inspection of the service. Therefore, Leia provides another SPP; Leia's last SPP shows her orientation to the task of providing the response *based on* the physical inspection. Her advanced coordination of talk and physical inspection is also seen in her additional "yes" between her first and last SPPs (Line 4). Note that, in addition to her embodied actions that indicate the continuing

inspection, Leia rarely provides possible completion points between her first and last SPPs. By doing so, Leia provides Tomo with a legitimate choice of withholding verbal action until her final SPP is given.

We have just seen the customer's competence in managing multiple strands in the service-assessment sequence. Nevertheless, this work often requires a stylist's collaboration. The next segment takes a close look at a previous example shown at the beginning of this chapter. It serves not only as another example of the professional customer, but it also confirms the stylist's joint effort in the customer's production of multiple SPPs. This data was recorded in a beauty salon in the U.S., which operates on a first-come-first-served basis. In this particular salon, about five or more customers are typically waiting in the lounge due to the high volume of customers that visit its location, conveniently situated on a university campus. The customer, Amy, has just gotten a trim-cut from the stylist, Hanh. Hanh then asks Amy to stand up to look at the back of her hair, hands her a hand-held mirror, and tells Amy to turn around. As Amy correctly positions herself and the mirror, Hanh briefly strokes the back of her hair and asks Amy if she likes the cut.

[2-B] Amy's two SPPs ("Amy & Hanh" 00:15-00:21)

- 1 Hanh: You like it?=
 |
 ((Hanh looks back at the large mirror and
 shifts her posture to step backwards))
- 2 Amy: =Um-hmm.
 └───┘
 ((Amy continues to comb and look at the back of her hair.
 Hanh steps back))
- 3 (1.0) ((Amy continues feeling though her hair, smiling,
 while Hanh stands back))



Figure 2: Hanh says, “Do you like it?” and steps back

Unlike Example 3 (Leia and Tomo), there is a significant amount of silence between Amy’s two SPPs (she gives a small chuckle in-between, but it is not attended to by the stylist and not significant for the purpose of the analysis at hand). Even though Amy displays her continued engagement in the physical inspection through her embodied actions (combing the hair and intensely looking into the hand-held mirror), these moments still create possible completion points, allowing Hanh to take the turn. Regardless, Hanh suspends her talk. This is an example of professional competence displayed by employing silence in talk. Nevile (2004) reports that no interruption during a relatively long silence can display the recipient’s “competence as a participant” (p. 459). His study focuses on an approach briefing, which is a report that a pilot-flying (the pilot in control) makes for another pilot (the Captain) before the landing process begins. In producing his talk, the reporting-pilot delays the presentation of “the plan” for 3.4 sec, which is remarkable and often problematic in ordinary conversation. In this sequence

however, the Captain does not treat the silence as an opportunity for him to take a turn, but treats it a part of the extended turn of the reporting-pilot, therefore jointly constructing the reporting-pilot's turn. Similarly, the stylist's employment of silence demonstrates her orientation to the customer's upcoming talk: that another SPP will be provided upon the completion of the physical inspection.

The role of a professional stylist may be enacted not only by suspending talk but also by suspending physical inspection. In the following example, Ken (the stylist) has just completed the cutting of Jun's hair. Before blow-drying and styling the haircut, Ken seeks Jun's approval through a service-assessment sequence. The data was recorded in Japan, where stylists typically hold the hand-held mirrors for their customers. Ken places the mirror behind Jun (Figure 3), and he does not move the process of physical inspection forward until Jun provides the *second* second paired action.



Figure 3: Ken holds a hand-held mirror behind Jun

[4] Jun's two SPPs ("Jun & Ken" 00:06-00:17)

- 1 Ken: ((Picking up a hand-held mirror)) Mae mitai ni chotto=
before like P a little
- ((Ken pads the back of Jun's hair, ((Ken places the mirror
looking at her in the large mirror)) behind Jun))
- 2 Ken: =kacchiri shita kanji jyanai n desu kedo mo::=
formal PAS impression NEG P CP but P
It doesn't look as formal as it did before, but
- ((Jun nods))((Jun nods twice))
- 3 Jun: =A, [hai.
Oh, yes.
- 4 Ken: [Konna kanji na n desu yo:
like-this impression P P CP FP
It looks like this, you know.
- ((Jun repetitively nods. Ken retracts his hand from Jun's head))
- 5 Jun: °hai°. **Yes.**
- 6 (0.6)((Jun continuously nods three times))
- 7 (0.8)
- 8 Jun: ((nods))
- 9 Ken: ((Moves the mirror from left to right))
- 10 Jun: A, ii desu. Mijikaku te.
Oh good CP short P
Oh, it's short and good.
- 11 (0.8)((Ken positions the mirror a bit higher))
- 12 Ken: Daijyoubu desu [ka? ((Ken nods))
alright CP Q
Is it alright?
- ((Jun nods three times))
- 13 Jun: [Hai.=
Yes.
- ((Ken nods))
- 14 Ken: =Hai. ((Ken bows and closes the mirror))
Yes.

Having explained the new haircut, Ken places a hand-held mirror behind Jun for her to look through. As he initiates the physical inspection, he also provides a comment on the new haircut, making Jun's action of agreeing or disagreeing relevant for her next turn (line 4). Jun immediately responds to it with the SPP (line 5), followed by another couple of head nods (line 6). Recall that Amy (Example 2) and Leia (Example 3) made relevant their continued physical inspection through embodied actions while producing their *first* SPPs. Unlike them, Jun merely continues to stare at the mirror (either at the back of her hair or at the stylist reflected in the large mirror, which cannot be distinguished from the angle of the videotape), and no verbal or embodied actions that would indicate her imminent actions are seen. In other words, the end of line 6 can be a turn completion point, which can be followed by some actions from Ken (e.g., providing an SCT).

Yet, Ken suspends both talk and physical inspection. He keeps his gaze to the large mirror and continues to hold up the portable mirror in the same position (line 7). Ken's actions conflict with the preference for responsive actions, namely progressivity (see p. 36 for this dissertation). Yet, his actions demonstrate the following: 1) his understanding of Jun's *first* SPP as the outcome of her orientation to the preference for agreement; and 2) his orientation to the nature of the service-assessment: the customer's service-assessment is valid *upon* the completion of the sufficient physical inspection. As a result, Jun provides another second paired action in line 8 – a clear head nod –, and Ken finally advances the process of physical inspection by relocating the hand-held mirror to focus on a different area of the cut.

In the group of cases above, we witnessed the customer's production of multiple SPPs. The customer may actively do so (as seen in Leia's example), and/or the stylist may solicit the multiple SPPs, as Ken had done in the last example. In any case, the

multiple SPPs were a result of the participants' coordination of multiple strands in responding to the unique combination of courses of relevant actions: orienting to the preference for agreement *and* providing an assessment upon the completion of physical inspection. However, the stylist and the customer may not always share their attentiveness to the *second* SPP. Before concluding the chapter, I will examine two instances of such a case, and attempt to account for the deviant cases.

4.2 THE PARTICIPANT'S DISORIENTATION TO THE *SECOND* SPP

Even though the service-assessment is supposedly made upon the completion of the physical inspection of the service, the customer often provides an assessment before the completion of the physical inspection due to his/her orientation to the preference for agreement. In doing so, the customer prevents the stylist from sensing the possible disagreement to come. However, the SPP is made valid with the physical inspection. Thus, as we saw in previous examples, the customer also orients to the assignment of providing the SPP based on the physical evaluation via the *second* SPP. Yet, stylists and customers may not be equally attentive to the *second* SPP; in some cases, their understanding of the next relevant action differs. In this section, I will present an example in which the stylist disregards the customer's *second* SPP, and follow with a case in which the customer's *second* SPP is missing.

The first example is retrieved from a recorded session at a unisex salon that operates on both an appointment as well as first-come-first-serve-basis, due to the high number of stylists on hand. The salon is located in South-Central Austin, which carries a reputation as a unique and fashionable area. Fittingly, the salon offers a hip atmosphere with trendy décor, upbeat music, and beer for waiting customers. The data was recorded on a Sunday afternoon, and there were about 8 customers waiting for their turn in a

lounge. It was the first time for the customer, Kim, to meet the stylist, Nita, and they talked about miscellaneous events in their lives throughout the cutting procedure. Towards the end of the cutting procedure, Kim verbalized her satisfaction of the new haircut by saying “it’s cute,” and “I already like it so much.” The following segment begins where Nita finishes styling the new cut. Both Nita and Kim are facing a large mirror in front of them, and a hand-held mirror has yet to be given to Kim (Figure 4).



Figure 4: Nita finishes styling Kim's new cut

[5] Single SPP ("Kim & Nita" 03:50-04:01)

1 Nita: How's that look?
 └──────────┘
 ((Nita walks off camera))

2 Kim: (.) G[reat.
 | | |
 ((Kim nods twice)) ((Kim turns her head from side to side while looking
 at the mirror))

3 Nita: [Do you like it? =

```

4      Kim: =I love it.=  

         |  

         ((Kim continues to turn her head from side to side))

5      Nita: =Oh awesome, awesome.=  

         |  

         ((Kim continues to turn her head from one side to the other))

6      Kim: =Oh: I r[eally, >really like it<.=  

         |  

         ((Kim faces straight forward again))

7      Nita: [Let me-  

         |  

         ((Nita returns to Kim, brushes the hair clippings off the cover))

8      Nita: =I want you to stand up cuz these chairs don't turn around=  

         |                               |  

         ((Steps behind Kim to take off the cover))((Nita makes a 'turning around'/  

                                                    swirling gesture with her right hand))  

                                                |  

                                                ((Kim nods))

9      Nita: =very well, [so I want you to stand up and take a look at  

10     Kim: [Okay.  

         |  

         ((Kim nods))

11     Nita: =the back.=

12     Kim: =Okay.
```

Having styled the new haircut, Nita asks Kim how it looks (line 1). Nita soon modifies the question from asking about how the new cut looks to how the customer feels about it, which overlaps with Kim's answer to Nita's original question (lines 2-3). Nita's self-repair is an interesting phenomenon in itself, but for now my analysis focuses on what happens after Nita's modified FPP in line 3. Similar to the previous examples, Kim conducts a preferred action by providing an immediate and upgraded response in line 4 (her utterance is latched onto Nita's question, using "love" instead of "like"). Yet, the stylist's next action is different from those in the previous examples. Recall that the

stylist withheld his/her talk (i.e., the SCT) until the customer's *second* SPP was provided in the previous examples. In this case, the stylist provides the SCT as soon as the customer utters the *first* SPP (line 5). In other words, the stylist regards the *first* SPP as a valid response to her FPP and advances the sequence to its closure.

While Nita initiates a sequence closure, Kim is still engaged in her physical inspection; she continuously turns her head from side to side throughout her *first* SPP and Nita's SCT (lines 4-5). Notice also that Kim provides another SPP upon her completion of the physical inspection (when she stops turning her head in line 6). Kim's *second* SPP indicates her orientation to the "validity" of the service-assessment –the assessment is valid upon the completion of physical inspection. However, the stylist does not orient to it. Unlike the stylists in the previous examples, Nita does not make the physical inspection or the *second* SPP relevant next, as seen in her already provided SCT, as well as her following action of trying to launch a new sequence during Kim's *second* SPP. Nita cuts herself off in favor of Kim's turn (line 7), but soon resumes her sentence upon Kim's turn completion point. Furthermore, she does so without acknowledging Kim's *second* SPP (line 8).

The question is then, why did Nita provide the SCT so soon while Kim was still engaged in the physical inspection? Why did she not wait for, or at least acknowledge Kim's *second* SPP, like the other stylists did in earlier examples? Was she just a bad, uncaring stylist?

There are a few sets of observations to be highlighted in this segment. To begin with, as you may anticipate from Nita's request in lines 8-9, this sequence is followed by another, more official service-assessment sequence, with the aid of a hand-held mirror. That is to say, retrospectively, the sequence we have just looked at is a pre-sequence to the service-assessment sequence. This fact may explain Nita's disorientation to Kim's

multiple SPPs. The appropriate timing for the physical inspection is yet to come, and Nita's FPP was simply to activate a yes/no question-answer sequence to prepare for the upcoming service-assessment sequence, but not to begin the physical inspection. As a result, Nita takes Kim's single SPP as a relevant action and provides the SCT. Because Kim should not be engaged in the physical inspection yet, her production of the *second* SPP is also irrelevant. This is made clear with Nita's action of disregarding Kim's *second* SPP.

Another noticeable aspect of this sequence is the material environment that Kim is located in. The only mirror available to Kim up to this point in time is the large mirror which they have been facing towards since the beginning of the session. In other words, it is obvious to the participants that Kim's view of the new cut has been limited so far in the session. Being aware of Kim's restricted material condition likely eliminates the possibility of Nita's FPP as a request for Kim to conduct the physical inspection. Accordingly, Nita's FPP should require the *first*/single SPP only. Nonetheless, Kim takes Nita's FPP as more than a question-answer sequence and engages in the physical inspection by expanding the view by turning her head from side to side. However, she can only turn her head about 45 degrees to each side (Figure 5), which adds little to the current view. Therefore, even though Kim provides the *second* SPP, Nita disregards it since it should not be the "valid" service-assessment; there should not be yet the assessment based on the physical inspection.



Figure 5: Kim turns head from side to side

This example lends credence to the propositions that have been made in this chapter. First, it demonstrates the customer's strong orientation to the preference for agreement, as well as the customer's sensitivity to the SPP's justification via physical inspection and the *second* SPP. Secondly, the stylist's disorientation to the customer's *second* SPP was accounted by contextual and material conditions (the sequence was preliminary to the service-assessment sequence, and the customer's physical arrangement made almost no physical inspection conditionally relevant next). This observation points out that, on the other hand, the stylist makes the customer's physical inspection relevant with the help of the material environments, such as the customer's physical position and the availability of the hand-held mirror, as seen in the previous examples.

The example above demonstrated the participants' mismatched orientations to the *second* SPP due to their different understandings of what has been made conditionally relevant by the stylist's FPP. Nonetheless, all the cases we have seen so far confirm the

3 Eri: =Right, right.
 |
 ((Eri looks at the hand-held mirror))

4 Tia: Yea:h=
 └───┘
 ((Tia gazes at the large mirror and steps back))

Eri looks up toward Tia when Tia starts gesturing (waving her open palms), and Tia also begins to look at Eri (line 2). Eri immediately responds to Tia's comments (line 3). As she produces this preferred action, she exits from the mutual gaze and looks back toward the mirror in her hand. Tia, likewise, shifts her gaze from Eri to the back of her hair in the large mirror and steps back as she provides an SCT (line 4). Their embodied actions indicate more physical inspection to come, and thus, the talk may be possibly suspended till the physical inspection is completed. Nonetheless, what imminently takes place is the customer's initiation in a session closure, as seen below:

[6-B] Eri's mismatched actions ("Eri & Tia" 00:16-00:23)

4 Tia: Yea:h=
 └───┘
 ((Gazes at the large mirror and steps back))

5 Eri: =Okay, than[k yo:u
 └──────────┘
 ((Runs her fingers through her hair))
 | └───┘
 ((Looks at Tia)) ((Looks at the mirror))

6 Tia: [Do you l:ike i:[:t?
 └──────────┘
 ((Stays still, looking at the large mirror))
 |
 ((Eri momentarily looks at Tia))

7 Eri: [Yes >thank you.< =
 └──────────┘
 ((Looks at the mirror, shaking
 her head from side to side))

8 Tia: =Is that length okay?
 └──────────┘
 ((Both keep looking at Eri's hair in the large mirror,
 as Eri keeps shaking her head from side to side))

9 Eri: ((Brings another hand to support the hand-held mirror,
 and looks intensely at it))

10 Tia: Is it, feel through your hair and tell me if it feels thin=

11 Tia: =enough or thick enough, if you need mo:re taken o:ut like.

As soon as Tia provides the SCT in line 4, Eri launches another sequence by saying, “okay, thank you” (line 5). Her utterance activates an adjacency pair of the exchange of gratitude and its acceptance. Such a sequence is often used to close the whole session, but here, it contradicts Eri’s bodily orientation. Eri briefly looks at Tia at the beginning of her utterance but again immediately shifts her gaze back to the portable mirror, maintaining its position in front of her face (line 5). Thus, while Eri’s talk hints at the forthcoming session-closure, her embodied actions indicate the continuation of physical evaluation (Figure 6). Furthermore, they have not yet reached the base pair of the service-assessment sequence.



Figure 6: Eri's mismatched vocal and embodied actions

What Tia does next is noteworthy. She disregards the adjacency pair initiated by Eri and starts the base pair of the service-assessment sequence (line 6). Tia proposes a question which makes Eri's yes/no answer relevant next. Eri then provides the base SPP in a preferred-action turn shape, stressing "yes" and overlapping the response with the FPP. Eri also says a quick "thank you," but her embodied actions yet again mark the continued physical inspection; she briefly looks at Tia right before she says "Yes," but soon she looks back at the mirror during her utterance, shaking her hair from side to side (line 7). Eri's talk is designed to provide a preferred response to Tia's question, but Tia's subsequent actions reveal that Eri's actions were irrelevant. Tia again disorients to Eri's verbal reaction and asks another question without delay (line 8). This time, she specifically asks about the length, and her gaze and posture continue to be focused on Eri's hair reflected in the large mirror. Tia's question can be seen as the modified base FPP that emphasizes the relevance of Eri's further physical inspection rather than Eri's

quick verbal response. Eri then finally suspends the talk and intensely looks at the mirror (line 9). As Eri concentrates on the physical inspection, Tia requests Eri to again conduct a more specific physical action to evaluate the service (lines 10-11).

In this example, the customer failed to effectively coordinate her verbal actions with the physical inspection. We also witnessed the stylist's professionalism in her ability to fix this mismatching progression of multiple strands. Tia constantly neglected Eri's verbal actions and instead launched new sequences. In the end, she successfully led Eri to engage exclusively in the physical inspection, which also harmonized the development of multiple strands.

Tia's attentiveness to the missing *second* SPP and her effort for pursuing it, indeed, contributed to the successful outcome of the haircutting session. This particular sequence was followed by yet another consultation where they revisit some photographic images and discuss what Eri originally had in her mind. Below is the simplified transcript of what happened after the sequence above. For the purpose at hand, descriptions of embodied actions and several lines in the middle have been omitted.

[6-C] Post-expanded sequence ("Eri & Tia" 00:15-02:14)

- 10 Tia: Is it, feel through your hair and tell me if it feels thin=
- 11 Tia: =enough or thick enough, if you need mo:re taken o:ut like.
- 12 Tia: If you want like um, (.) need it texturized or thin it out=
- 13 Tia: =or anything.
- 14 Eri: What do you mean, texturized?
- 15 Tia: Like, thinned-out, like, but then we vol-, we blow-dried it=
- 16 Tia: =so it looks [just fuller.
- 17 Eri: [Ah:hh:::]:

[illegible]

87 Tia: =it's only gonna look (.) thin. [(.) Thinner than this.=
88 Eri: [Nn:
89 Eri: =Right, rig[ht.
90 Tia: [Because you put the volu[me, hehe.
91 Eri: [yeayeayeayeayeyeah.
92 Tia: ((Gazes at the cover and fixes it)) So I am not gonna take=
93 Tia: =too much so that it won't be li[ke, so:: shattered,=
94 Eri: [kay, heh.
95 Tia: =you know?
96 ((Tia starts thinning out Eri's hair))

During the sequence above, Eri verbalizes her desire for her hair to be more thinned-out with the help of a third person (the videographer). Such actions from Eri contradict her earlier verbal actions of indicating satisfaction and proposing a session closure (lines 5-7), and Eri's request for additional haircutting would not have been made if Tia did not expand the service-assessment sequence. In other words, if Tia aligned with Eri's verbal actions and closed the session in lines 4-8, the outcome might have been called "unsuccessful." Nevertheless, Tia oriented to the lack of multiple SPPs and expanded the sequence, which provided Eri with enough room for physical evaluation, and thus led them immediately to an additional cutting session.

4.3 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter was to examine how participants coordinate multiple strands through multiple SPPs in the service-assessment sequence. I focused on several instances of multiple SPPs that were collaboratively produced by the customer and the stylist, as well as cases in which the stylist disregarded, and in which the customer

missed, the *second* SPP. Throughout these cases, we witnessed the primary function of multiple SPPs to coordinate the two different strands of talk and physical inspection, so that they progress in unison.

In Examples 2, 3, and 4, the customers provided the *first* SPP before they finished the physical inspection to prevent the stylists from anticipating the chance of a pending, dispreferred response. Yet, since it is not a valid service-assessment, the *second* SPP was provided upon the completion of the physical inspection. On the other hand, the *first* SPP may be taken as a valid response when the environment is not yet arranged for the physical inspection. We observed such a case in Example 5, when the act of conducting a physical inspection of the cut was not conditionally relevant. Hence, when the customer carried out her physical inspection prematurely, and also provided the corresponding *second* SPP, the stylist demonstrated its irrelevance by disregarding it. Finally, the effort for pursuing the simultaneous operation of multiple strands was especially visible in the stylist's actions in Example 6. She stretched the sequence and fixed the unbalanced progression of talk and physical inspection.

Balancing the multiple strands can contribute to the maximum occurrence of a preferred outcome in the service-assessment sequence, thereby achieving a satisfactory closure of the service encounter altogether. In some of the examples highlighted in this paper, the multiple SPPs were produced during a pre-expansion of the service-assessment sequence (i.e., prior to the exchange of the base pair). Conversation Analysis has revealed various types of pre-work that participants engage in, such as “pre-invitation,” “pre-offer/request,” and “pre-announcement.” Schegloff (2007) explains pre-expansion as the participants’ “orientation to avoidance of problematic responses to a base FPP – most notably rejection (as with invitations, offers, requests, telling-as-news, etc.), but also non-uptakes (as in troubled hearing or understanding)” (p. 57). In a similar fashion,

participants of the service-assessment sequence often preface the base sequence with explanations of the new cut, comments on how to style the cut, and questions concerning the new style. In doing so, the participants also engage in the physical inspection of the new cut. By coordinating multiple strands in pre-expansion, they establish pre-agreement on the services provided, which results in the unproblematic exchange of the base pair. We observed such circumstances in Example 3 and Example 4, where in both instances, the base sequence was carried out smoothly without any delay. This seemingly effortless exchange of the base pair was made possible through the joint work of the stylist and the customer, seen in the multiple SPPs in the pre-expansion of the service-assessment sequence.

Since the pre-expansion allows room for the physical inspection and the preparation for the preferred outcome of the base sequence, it greatly contributes to the service-assessment sequence. However, not every service-assessment sequence is pre-expanded. In the segment with Amy and Hanh (Example 2), the stylist initiated the base sequence as soon as the physical inspection began. Yet, by using two SPPs and embodied practices, the participants successfully fulfilled the two actions of inspecting the new cut, and coming to a consensus on the service provided. So, when the pre-expansion takes place, the base sequence mostly functions as a sequence-closing sequence, and if not, the base sequence itself gets stretched to afford the extra room for multiple strands. Either way, the strands of verbal sequence and the physical inspection are brought to closure in unison, producing a “successful” haircut. Although, that is to say, unbalanced progression of multiple strands may cause an unsuccessful outcome. Example 6 demonstrated such a case, in which the customer moved the talk forward without the *second* SPP. If the stylist did not work to fix the situation, the absence of the *second* SPP would have brought significant damage to the overall outcome of the haircutting activity.

An upfront opinion of the service is sought from the customer in most, if not all, service-assessment sequences, and that requires unique combinations of talk and physical evaluation of the service. Orienting to the preference for agreement and thus providing an immediate response to the stylist's utterance may interfere with the legitimate order of the evaluation process: physical inspection *followed by* its assessment. Balancing these actions requires methodical and professional communication skills. The examples we have observed in this chapter demonstrated that participants systematically juggle multiple strands to accomplish a unique combination of actions, and the production of multiple SPPs was a visible result of such professional communication competence.

In the next chapter, we will turn our attention to what happens beyond what we explored in this chapter: the post-expansion and the negotiation of closure. What happens if the customer continues the physical inspection, even after the *second* SPP? How does the stylist initiate a sequence closure and pursue the customer's satisfaction all at once? In addition, I will show how participants negotiate when to close the sequence and how it is supported by the systematic coordination of multiple strands.

Chapter 5. Whose Satisfaction is It Anyway?: Professionalism Seen in the Negotiation of Sequence Closure

5.0 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 4, we observed that the stylists' professionalized communication skills provided the customer with two things: 1) a sufficient period of physical inspection; and 2) the parallel progression of talk and physical inspection. We not only observed that the stylist often suspended talk until after the customer's *first* SPP was provided, but we also witnessed the delay until the customer completed the physical inspection and provided the *second* SPP. When a customer moved the talk forward before finishing the physical inspection, the stylist disregarded the customer's verbal action of initiating a closure, and stretched the service-assessment sequence by asking a series of questions.

Nonetheless, the service-assessment sequence must be closed at some point. The negotiation of closure has been studied to a great extent (see pp. 37-40 of this dissertation), mainly due to its sensitive nature; for instance, "how speakers leave one another may be a resource for their further interactions" (Button, 1987, p. 148). This is especially so in the delivery of professional service, where closure ought to accompany a successful outcome, which in turn increases the chance of repeat customers. Closure of the haircutting activity often takes place in, or immediately after, the service-assessment sequence. So, how and when do participants engage in closing the service-assessment sequence, and how do they determine appropriate timing for the sequence completion? In this chapter, I will examine several cases of sequence closure. I will first discuss how stylists use talk to terminate physical inspection, thus moving the sequence forward to its closure. Then, I will examine the opposite cases, in which stylists continue with talk to initiate a non-minimal post-expansion of the sequence. The chapter will conclude with a

discussion of how the “appropriate” moment for sequence closure is determined, and *whose* satisfaction actually has a bearing on a “successful” closure.

5.1 ACTIVATING TALK TO DEACTIVATE PHYSICAL INSPECTION

One of the findings of the analysis in Chapter 4 was that the service-assessment sequence is not brought to closure until both the strand of talk and that of physical inspection are completed. We also saw examples in which the customer finished physical inspection as s/he provided the *second* SPP. Conversely, some customers may continue their physical inspection even after the sequence closure is made relevant: i.e., after they provide multiple SPPs and/or overt positive service-assessments. One possible action for the stylist to take is to wait for the customer’s voluntary completion of his/her physical inspection. However, stylists are habitually required to complete a session within a certain time frame due to nature of the business, such as subsequent appointments and/or waiting customers. Thus, another relevant action may be to request for the discontinuation of the physical inspection, but its interpretation may be taken as the stylist’s uncaring attitude towards the client. This could also offend the customer and result in an unsuccessful closure, thus threatening future or repeat business. So what do stylists do?

Stylists use various verbal actions other than requesting a termination of the physical inspection. Yet, that is not the only event happening here. Those verbal actions trigger certain embodied actions, which contribute to the *deactivation* of the physical inspection. In what follows, I will describe the various verbal actions that stylists use in order to terminate the physical inspection.

5.1.1 The Base Sequence as a Sequence-Closing Sequence

When the service-assessment sequence is pre-expanded, the base sequence may function to complete a service-assessment sequence (i.e., a sequence-closing sequence). We saw this pattern in Examples 3 and 4 of Chapter 4. In both examples, the participants engaged in a pre-expansion of the sequence, creating enough room for the physical inspection and establishing a pre-agreement on the quality of the service. As a result, when the base pair of the service-assessment sequence was finally exchanged, it was conducted without any gap and served as a sequence-closing sequence.

One remarkable observation of these examples is that, the strand of physical inspection had been already completed (or at least its completion had been made relevant) by the time the participants reached the base sequence. In Example 3, the customer shifted her gaze from the mirror and looked up at the stylist, as well as leaned back on the chair, indicating the completion of her physical inspection. Soon after that, the stylist launched the base sequence, and the service-assessment sequence was brought to closure. In Example 4, the customer provided positive assessments every time she received new visual information of the cut (i.e., as the stylist positioned the hand-held mirror in different positions). As the stylist exhausted all the possible angles for inspection, its completion was made relevant. Then, the stylist launched the base sequence, which completed the service-assessment sequence.

In these cases, consequently, the strand of talk was *woven into* the strand of physical inspection; the base sequence was launched *as* the physical inspection was completed. The arguments about to be made in the next case are quite the opposite, when the physical inspection is manipulated by the talk. Because the base sequence can serve as a sequence-completion sequence, the stylist may practice it *in order to* terminate the strand of physical inspection. The next few examples demonstrate such cases.

[8-A] The volume of the hair ("Chie & Tia" 02:10-02:40)

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the end, Tia launches a base sequence, which in turn becomes the sequence-closing sequence.

[8-B] The volume of the hair ("Chie & Tia" 02:40-02:50)

19 (1.0)((Tia continues to look at Chie in the large mirror,
 and Chie brings the hand-held mirror up a little))

20 Tia: °Yeah, so:. (0.3) >Does that look okaa[y<

```

      |      |
((Chie looks at the ((Chie looks back at
hand-held mirror))  the large mirror))
      |      |
      ((Tia steps toward and      ((Chie lowers the
looks directly at Chie))  hand-held mirror))

```

21 Chie: [Oka:y, >Yea<.
 |
 ((Chie looks directly at Tia, nodding))

```

22      Tia:  Alright.  Awsome.
              |      |
              ((Looks away))  ((Takes the hand-held mirror from Chie))
                              |
                              ((Chie looks front))

```

23 Chie: Thank you.

24 Tia: You're welcome.



Figure 7: Tia steps toward and shifts her gaze to Chie

As Tia initiates the base sequence (line 20), she also produces an embodied action that indicates her engagement in the conversation with Chie; she steps toward Chie and shifts her gaze from the large mirror to Chie (Figure 7). Yet, this embodied action also serves as a catalyst to terminate the physical inspection. The next actions that have now been made conditionally relevant are not only Chie's yes-no responses, but also Chie's gaze shift from the mirror to Tia, thus ending (or suspending) the physical inspection. Chie immediately attends to them by: 1) providing a preferred response (Chie's SPP is slightly overlapped with Tia's FPP, and her affirmed response "yea" is stressed); and 2) lowering the hand-held mirror and shifting her gaze to Tia (line 21). Subsequently, Tia provides an SCT and takes the hand-held mirror back from Chie (line 22). As a result, the strands of talk and physical inspection were brought to closure in unison, followed by Chie's initiation of an activity-closing sequence: an exchange of appreciation and acceptance.

Here we see another, short example to validate the use of base FPP for terminating the physical inspection. In this segment, Kay, the stylist, and Minh, the customer, have already progressed through a service-assessment sequence of the cutting session but prior to the styling session. Having established an agreement on a successful cut, they then advance to the styling portion of the haircutting session. We pick up from the moment that Kay has just finished styling the cut, and begins another service-assessment sequence by providing Minh with a hand-held mirror.

[9] "Okay?" ("Minh & Kay" 03:30-03:45)

1 Kay: ((Hands a hand-held mirror to Minh and turns the chair 90 degrees
to the right))

2 (1.3) ((Kay stops the chair, looking at the large mirror;
Minh has been holding up the hand-held mirror))

3 Minh: Hm.
|
((Kay turns the chair an additional 45 degrees to the right))

4 Kay: ° () °
└──────────┘
|
((Kay retracts her hand from the chair and moves off camera))

5 (1.5) ((Kay wipes her hands on a towel, and Minh keeps looking
at the hand-held mirror))

6 Minh: ((Distinctively nods))

7 Minh: Yes.
|
((Kay puts down the hand towel))

8 (3.0) ((Minh touches and feels the back of his head, continuing to look
at the mirror. Kay looks and steps toward Minh with her hand
reaching the hand-held mirror, but withholds the hand and shifts
her gaze from Minh to the large mirror as she recognizes that Minh
is still engaged in the physical inspection.))

9 Minh: ((Finishes feeling the back of his head, but continues to hold up
and look at the hand-held mirror.))

10 Kay: Okay?

11 Minh: Uh-huh.=
 |
 ((Looks up at Kay and slightly lowers the hand-held mirror))

12 Kay: =Alright.
 └─┬─┘
 ((Kay shifts her gaze at and steps toward Minh
 to receive the hand-held mirror))

13 Minh: Thank you.
 └─┬─┘
 ((Minh gives the mirror back to Kay))

14 Kay: Thank you.

Having provided multiple SPPs in line 3 and line 7, Minh continues his physical inspection. Kay suspends her actions for a while (line 8), but then launches the base sequence (line 10). Here, unlike the previous example, Kay does not shift her gaze or her posture toward Minh, nor does she produce any other embodied action that may solicit Minh's corresponding embodied action; she only continues looking at the large mirror (Figure 8).



Figure 8: Kay says, “Okay?”

Regardless, her verbal actions alone still contribute to the completion of physical inspection. Minh immediately provides an SPP and suspends the physical inspection by shifting his gaze and *slightly* lowering the hand-held mirror (line 11). This embodied action may have been an outcome of his engagement in the conversation rather than his commitment in completing the physical inspection, seeing that he does not noticeably lower the mirror. Whatever the intention may be, his verbal and embodied actions are attended to by Kay as an opportunity to end the physical inspection. She shifts her gaze towards Minh, steps toward him, as well as provides an SCT (line 12). Having finished the service-assessment sequence, Minh initiates an activity-closing sequence (lines 13-14). While it may not seem like much at first, the stylist successfully moved the sequence forward to its closure without having to further verbalize it, and did so in a manner that gave the customer ample time to complete his assessment.

5.1.2 Verbal Actions beyond the Base Sequence

As seen in the examples above, when the participants successfully orient to the base sequence as a sequence-closing sequence, they complete the physical inspection and move on to the activity-closing sequence, such as an exchange of expressing gratitude and accepting it. At times, however, the customer has already provided the base SPP but still continues the physical inspection. In such cases, launching another base FPP may not be an appropriate action for the stylist. Thus, stylists may use alternative verbal actions for the disengagement from the physical inspection.

For instance, a third party may become a resource for the stylist to advance the sequence. In the following example, Minh is receiving his regular haircutting service from his stylist, Tia. Saya, Minh's fiancée, observes the session off-camera, while Tia and Minh carry conversations about their work and personal lives among themselves.

[10-A] Using a fiancée's approval ("Minh & Tia Nov06"
00:13-00:44)

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[illegible]



Figure 9: Tia asks the third party

While there are often third parties in typical haircutting settings, such as waiting customers and other stylists, third parties do not often accompany the primary customer to offer their own service-assessments for the stylists. Exceptions can be seen in cases where the customer is a child, and a parent is present, or if significant others are getting their haircuts at the same time, but most of the time, the customer comes in alone. What then is the appropriate action for a stylist to take when a third party is not available, and a customer prolongs physical inspection, even after the verbal sequence reaches its completion (i.e., the base sequence is completed)?

The stylist may also use positive assessments in moving the physical inspection forward. The next example presents such a case. I have already shown this data as Example 5 in Chapter 4, in which the stylist, Nita, disregarded the customer, Kim's *second* SPP due to another, more official service-assessment sequence to come. This segment takes place right after they complete the first, preliminary service-assessment sequence.


While a base FPP is missing in this segment¹³, the customer, Kim, provides a standard base SPP as she engages in the physical inspection. As seen in line 4, Kim organizes her utterance accordingly with the process of her physical inspection; she provides a news marker “oh” (e.g., Heritage, 1984), every time she shifts her posture and gathers new visual information from various angles of the new haircut. As she exhausts the possible angles and reaches a possible completion point, the stylist, Nita, provides an SCT (line 5). By doing so, Nita acknowledges Kim’s SPP as valid: that the legitimate amount of physical inspection has been done for Kim to provide the base SPP. It turns out that Kim has yet not finished with her turn or the physical inspection; she goes on by explaining what she means by “that” (line 6). Nita makes an utterance at Kim’s possible turn completion point, agreeing with Kim (line 7), which ends up overlapping with Kim’s continued turn in line 8.

One noteworthy feature of this example is Kim’s elaborated expressions of her upgraded satisfaction through the repetitive use of high-pitched “Oh” and “love.” In addition, she provides an account for why she likes it (lines 6 and 8). Kim’s verbalized observations of the new cut authenticate that her physical inspection has been sufficient. Furthermore, Kim had already provided several positive service-assessments throughout the haircutting activity: toward the end of their cutting session, as well as during the preliminary service-assessment sequence (see Example 5 in Chapter 4). Thus, it is obvious to Nita that Kim has practiced a sufficient amount of physical inspection and has been satisfied with the new hairstyle, and such perception is reflected in Nita’s multiple SCTs. Hence, it is irrelevant that Kim continues to engage in the physical inspection in line 9; having finished her turn, she again shifts her posture, intensely looking at the

¹³ Missing the base FPP is not an unusual event in the service-assessment sequence. As I stated in Chapter 3, the stylist’s bodily actions (e.g., handing a hand-held mirror to the customer, turning a chair, etc.) and/or other types of verbal actions (e.g., “Here it is.” “Take a look at the back.”) may function as the FPP.

[11-B] Nita's compliment ("Kim & Nita" 04:15-04:27)

10 Nita: It's so-, it's like, flattering on (.)=
 | └──────────┘
((Nita steps towards Kim)) ((Nita waves her hands in a flapping motion))
 | | |
((Kim looks toward Nita)) ((Kim lowers the hand-held mirror and looks at Nita)) ((Kim rests her left hand on her waist))

12 Kim: [um-hmmm.

 ((Kim turns around and looks at the large mirror, nodding))

((Nita finishes brushing and touches D's hair))

15 Nita: [Oh: °thank you°
|
(Nita looks at Kim))

17 Nita: [Thank YOU I appreciate it.
 | |
 ((Nita takes the mirror back from Kim)) ((Kim looks up at Nita))

Nita stays still and keeps silent for about 2 seconds, but seeing no sign of Kim's upcoming talk, Nita compliments the new cut's potential (lines 10-11). Nita's verbal action invites Kim's agreement or disagreement, which alone may make Kim engage primarily in the activity of conversation, and thus prevent continuation of the physical inspection. Yet, Nita increases the likelihood of Kim's disengagement from the physical inspection by stepping toward Kim during her utterance. Again, Nita's embodied action seems to go along with her engagement in the talk, but results in emphasizing the relevance of ending the physical inspection. Kim quickly reacts to these actions of Nita by also shifting her posture toward where Nita stands. As Kim looks at Nita, Nita makes a gesture to describe "flattering" in line 10 (sweeping her hands downward at a 45 degree angle), and that is when Kim lowers the portable mirror and discontinues her physical inspection (Figure 10). These actions of the participants are followed by Nita's smoothly coordinated physical behavior of cleaning the area around Kim's neck. Afterwards, Kim initiates activity-closure by once again expressing her satisfaction and thanking Nita (lines 14-16). In sum, the stylist effectively used her assessment in moving the physical inspection toward its closure. She did not have to make a request, nor forced Kim to stop looking at the mirror. In the end, the participants experienced a smooth, favorable transition to the activity closure.



Figure 10: Kim reacts to Nita's verbal and embodied actions

In the example that follows, the stylist also uses talk to discontinue the physical inspection. The following data segment was recorded in a small beauty salon located in East Austin. The salon operates mostly on appointments, and there is clearly no waiting area or lounge, with only one stylist working at a time. The customer, Shey, has scheduled an appointment with her stylist, Cara, for an hour during her lunch break from work. Throughout the session, there were only three people in the salon present: Shey, Cara, and the videographer. In the events prior to the segment below, Shey asks Cara to cut her shoulder-length-hair so that it will be slightly above her chin, and Cara spends about half an hour cutting Shey's hair. She then demonstrates to Shey how to style her new cut with a particular hair product. The segment begins where Cara finishes styling the cut and picks up a hand-held mirror to hand to Shey.

[12-A] Celebrating a Success ("Shey & Cara" 04:30-04:47)

- 1 Cara: Okay. ((Picks up a hand-held mirror))
- 2 (5.0) ((Shey receives the hand held mirror and looks at its reflection,
 held directly in front of her face, and Cara lightly fixes
 Shey's hair))
- 3 Cara: Mamaci:ta::
 |
 ((Cara starts turning the chair))
- 4 Shey: °Woo:::° ((Cara stops the chair at 45 degrees))
- 5 (2.2) ((Shey adjusts the mirror, intensely looking at the haircut. Cara
 clears up something off the camera with her left hand, while
 holding the chair with her right hand.))
- 6 Shey: O:h cute.
 |
 ((Shey is looking at the portable mirror,
 and Cara is looking at Shey in the large mirror))
- 7 (2.0) ((Cara turns the chair for 45 degrees))
- 8 Shey: O::h I lo:ve it.=
- 9 Cara: =Is that good?
 |
 ((Cara continues to turn the chair additional 40 degrees))
- 10 Shey: Yes.
- 11 (1.4) ((Cara continues to turn the chair))
- 12 Shey: °Very cute.°
 |
 ((Cara stops the chair))
- 13 (1.0) ((Shey continues to look at the hand-held mirror,
 and Cara continues to look at the large mirror.))

Cara starts turning the chair that Shey is sitting on as soon as Shey places the portable mirror in front of her face. Similar to Kim's behavior in Example 11, Shey also provides positive comments every time she gathers new visual information on the cut,

Cara proposes a celebration of the successful haircut as the next event by saying “Yay” (line 14). Her engagement in the talk provides her an opportunity with shifting her gaze from the large mirror to Shey, which results in Shey’s discontinuation of the physical inspection. Shey aligns with Cara’s actions via verbal and embodied actions: she makes a corresponding utterance (“Hoorah”), putting the hand-held mirror on her lap, and shifts her gaze up to Cara in line 15 (Figure 11). Cara then provides an SCT, which is even more upgraded positive comment, and starts clearing the loose hair from around her neck (line 16). In the end, the stylist advanced the sequence toward its closure *and* achieved a satisfactory closure by rousing cheerful feelings between her and the customer.



Figure 11: “Yay” “Hoorah”

This section has summarized several instances in which the stylist activates the talk in order for the customer to disengage from the physical inspection. I have demonstrated various verbal actions that the stylist conducted, such as launching the base sequence, recycling the base FPP to the third party, and celebrating the success of the

haircut. I have also focused on how the stylists have used these verbal actions to trigger certain embodied actions, which enhanced the likeliness of the customer's disengagement from the physical inspection as a next relevant action to be taken. But a few questions still remain. How did the stylist judge that it was indeed an appropriate time to end the physical inspection? What if the customer's prolonged engagement in the physical inspection was actually an indication of his/her dissatisfaction with the new cut?

One possible answer is the customer's multiple SPPs, and/or a reasonable amount of time spent for inspecting the new haircut. Multiple and positive service-assessments can be seen in Examples 9, 10, 11, and 12. In fact, some customers showed overt satisfaction through their upgraded assessments (Kim in Example 11 and Shey in Example 12), and other customers had already enacted their satisfactory feelings in pre- or insert-expansion, or at times, in earlier informal service-assessment sequences (e.g., after the cutting session but before drying and styling the cut). In particular, they had done so by using verbal practices other than just replying "yes" to the stylist's questions, such as: "I love it," "It's already very cute," "Oh, wow," and so on, and by producing them when relevant but not crucial (e.g., when the stylist gives a hand-held mirror, but without the stylist's verbal FPP). Such behavior demonstrates the customer's active involvement, thus contributes to the perceived authenticity of their verbal actions. Therefore, when these customers prolong the physical inspection upon its completion point, it is likely that they are doing so for a number of other reasons (e.g., simply obsessed with the mirrors), other than hinting at an issue with the new haircut. Ultimately, it allowed the stylist to choose the action of initiating a sequence completion even when the customers were still looking at the mirror.

We did not witness the customer's (Chie's) voluntarily multiple SPPs in Example 8, but a few observations should be made to justify Tia's initiation of sequence closure.

First of all, although not present in the transcript, Chie vocalized her satisfaction at the very beginning of this service-assessment sequence; as Tia removed the cover, Chie lightly turned her head and immediately provided a positive assessment, “oh, a lot better,” smiling. As Chie began the physical inspection, Tia explained the differences between how her hair looked previously and afterwards, which was acknowledged by Chie (nodding and saying “okay”). Secondly, as mentioned, this was one of Chie’s first haircutting experiences in the U.S. Because she was used to the way the service-assessment sequence is conducted in Japan, where the stylist holds a hand-held mirror for the customer, Chie may not have been skilled at, or aware of, organizing the multiple strands. In fact, Chie had a difficult time using the hand-held mirror. When Tia told Chie to hold up the hand-held mirror, raising her own hands to demonstrate the action to be taken by Chie, Chie produced the same hand motion on her haircut as opposed to the hand-held mirror. Tia had to take a moment to fix the miscommunication (as well as the back of Chie’s haircut) through verbal and embodied means. From this incident, it’s possible that Tia learned of Chie’s lack of familiarity with the coordination of multiple strands and judged that the prolonged physical inspection was rather an outcome of Chie’s untrained skills than a particular issue with the haircut.

In sum, these stylists determined the appropriate time for sequence closure not only based on sequence organization (i.e., the base sequence has been completed), but also due to other contextual elements. Then, what contextual elements are there when a stylist takes an opposite action, i.e., post-expanding the sequence beyond the possible sequence completion point? What justifies such actions from a stylist?

5.2 ACTIVATE TALK TO POST-EXPAND A SEQUENCE

According to Schegloff (2007), there are two types of post-expansion. One is minimal post-expansion, “designed to be possibly finished with a single turn” following the SPP (p. 149). Sequence Closing Thirds (SCTs), also frequently observed in my data, are the kinds of minimal post-expansion that require no responses from the other speakers, thus leading to sequence closure. On the other hand, non-minimal post-expansion, which is the case here, is activated when the turn following the SPP is itself an FPP, requiring another SPP and thus projecting “its non-minimality” (p. 149). In general, non-minimal post-expansion is made relevant when the second speaker’s response (SPP) is somehow problematic, such as dispreferred, disagreeing, and/or needing repair. We witnessed such a case in the last example of Chapter 4, where the multiple strands were not advanced in unison by the customer. In this case, non-minimal post-expansion was relevant, and more importantly, *necessary* in order to pursue a satisfactory closure of the haircutting activity. On the contrary, the kinds of non-minimal post-expansion to be examined in this section are *seemingly unnecessary*. Why would a stylist ask a question after a customer provides positive service-assessments *and* completes the physical inspection in an appropriate manner? Did the customer fail to spend “enough” time inspecting the haircut? Or, is the stylist trying to solicit a certain kind of action from the customer? What do the participants accomplish through a *seemingly unnecessary* non-minimal post-expansion?

The following is an example of the customer, Kira, and the stylist, Britney. Kira sees Britney every other week to have her hair washed and styled, and the data was recorded at one of those “regular” sessions. The salon is operated by an African-American manager and is decorated with several African-American cultural objects, including African-American paintings and ornaments. Likewise, the stylists and

customers seen on this day were all African-Americans. Britney normally serves her customers solely by appointments, and Kira was her last customer on this day. Since their salon activity has become more routine, there was no consultation at the beginning. The whole session took approximately an hour and a half, during which Kira and Britney talked about their personal lives, occasionally inviting the videographer to join their conversation, as well as progressing through their familiar steps of shampooing, drying, and styling Kira's hair. Having finished the styling, Britney hands a hand-held mirror to Kira for her physical inspection. Kira looks at her hair and vocalizes her overt satisfaction by saying "it's really nice." The transcript begins after this, where Britney suggests removing the cover so that Kira is able to get a better look at her haircut.

[13-A] Hairstyle as a long project
("Kira & Britney" 00:40-00:50)

1 Brit: (See it with its re[al clothes])

2 Kira: [Yea:y
|
((Bri takes off the cover))

3 Kira: hhhhhhhhhhhhh
|
((Bri puts the cover away))

4 (0.7) ((Kira shifts her posture 90 degrees to look at
the back of her head through the two mirrors))

5 Kira: (Let')s see.
|
((Bri looks at the back of Kira's head in the large mirror))

6 (2.1) ((Bri picks up a hair spray))

7 Kira: Beautiful as usual, [(.) thank you.=
| |
((Kira moves her head to see the top of her head)) ((Kira smiles))

[13-B] Hairstyle as a long project
 ("Kira & Britney" 00:50-01:07)

- 10 (0.4) ((Kira lowers the mirror and shifts her posture toward the large mirror))
- ((Kira moves the mirror to ((Kira pulls the mirror back in front return it to the table)) of her face and again looks into it))
- 11 Bri: What, you know it's interesting how the layers has come,=
 ((Kira looks at Bri in the large mirror)) ((Bri makes a downward pulling/stroking gesture with her fingers together at the end of her own hair))
- 12 Kira: =Yeah=
 ((Kira touches the ends of the back of her head))
- ((Kira retracts her hand from the back of her head))
- 13 Bri: =Grown (.) a:[ll in.
 ((Bri touches and softly strokes the back of her head))
- 14 Kira: [Uh-huh.
- 15 (1.4) ((Kira looks at herself in the large mirror and touches the hair on the left side of her face; Bri leans forward and keeps stroking the ends of her hair, using both hands))
- 16 Bri: To one another.
 ((Kira continues the same actions as seen in line 15))
- 17 (1.0) ((Bri stops stroking Kira's hair and stands straight))
- ((Bri steps back and moves to the side, looking at Kira's gestures on her hair))
- 18 Kira: Yup. (.) Cuz it was like, (.)=
 ((Kira lowers her head and touches the ends on the back of her head again)) ((Kira points to the back of her haircut, towards the middle))
- 19 Bri: =It wa[s slanted.=
 ((Bri nods)) ((Bri makes a gesture, motioning in a 45 degree slant downwards, with two hands in front of her face))

20 Kira: [Here.
 └─┘
 ((Kira makes a line in the middle of the back of her hair))

21 Kira: =Yeah.=
 |
 ((Bri nods; Kira puts down her hand))
 ((Bri slightly looks at the videographer))
 |

22 Bri: =Hhhhhhhh [hhhhhh
 |
 ((Kira holds out the hand-held mirror toward the counter))

23 Kira: [hhhhhhhhh °hhh Thank yo:[:u.
 | |
 ((Bri takes the hand-held mirror from Kira)) ((Kira looks down to stand up from the chair))

24 Bri: [You're welcome.

Britney's assessment in line 11 invites Kira's verbal action of agreeing or disagreeing, extending the strand of talk in the service-assessment sequence. Additionally, Britney touches her hair and makes a slanting, sweeping gesture in the middle of her utterance (line 11), which is followed by Kira's action of pulling back the hand-held mirror that was about to be put on the counter (Figure 12). The strand of physical inspection has now been extended by Kira's reengagement in a physical inspection: looking at and touching the back of her hair (lines 11-12). Yet, Kira has done her part as a professional customer ahead of this post-expansion, and there seemingly was no need for a post-expansion. So why did Britney expand the sequence that was almost closed?



Figure 12: Kira pulls back the mirror

A closer look at Britney's carefully designed actions in the post-expansion may help us to see what was "missing" in the base sequence of their service-assessment sequence. First let's analyze the content of Britney's verbal actions that launched the post-expansion. Britney proposes acknowledging an advancement of Kira's hairstyle (line 11). The success of a service is frequently determined through the improved quality of a haircut: for example, just how much *better* is the customer's haircut in order to make the customer look and feel better than when s/he came in to a salon. Both the stylist and the customer often acknowledge the positive transformation during, or/and at times prior to, the service-assessment sequence. They may do so by referring to its present condition in a less positive way at the beginning of the haircutting activity (e.g. "Your hair is so thick"). Participants may also compare the new state to the prior condition (e.g., "It feels much *better*," "Your hair is much *lighter*"), or they may describe the previous figure in comparison to its new figure (e.g., "Your hair was much *thicker* right here, when you came in"). Acknowledging and agreeing on the positive change contributes to the success

of the service provided, and we saw such cases in the examples shown in the previous section as well.

Now, recall the assessment made by Kira in line 7. While her satisfaction with the quality of the service is expressed (“*beautiful*”), Kira does not touch on its newness or surprising impact, as seen in her words, “beautiful *as usual*.” While the assessment “beautiful as usual” may have been enough for the customer, and is acceptable, considering that Kira comes to get the same service every other week, it did not meet the stylist’s expectations, leading her to the post-expansion.

Yet, bringing up this matter was not the only objective for the stylist, and we can see that just by seeing how long Britney continues with the post-expansion. Upon Britney’s assessment, Kira immediately shows her agreement (line 12). It turns out that Britney has not yet finished with her turn, as seen in line 13. At the end of line 13, Britney’s utterance clearly marks its completion point and is overlapped with Kira’s affirmative response (line 14). At this point, there are two possible actions that have been made conditionally relevant next: 1) Britney provides an SCT; and 2) Kira takes a turn. The first possible action is not made, seeing that Britney does not provide an SCT or other practices that initiate sequence closure. In fact, she continues her embodied actions of stroking Kira’s haircut, which eliminates the relevance of sequence closure that requires a completion of both strands of talk and physical inspection. Therefore, what has been made relevant here is rather some kind of action from Kira. What follows, however, is 1.4 seconds of silence, during which both participants engage in the physical inspection (line 15).

Having seen no forthcoming talk from Kira, Britney adds a few words to re-complete the previous sentence (line 16). Her utterance again marks her turn completion, making Kira’s forthcoming talk conditionally relevant. Kira does not immediately take a

turn, thus creating a second of silence, during which Britney finally retracts her hands from Kira's haircut and stands upright (line 17). While Britney's embodied actions can indicate an imminent sequence closure, this is not quite the case here. She does not produce a verbal action that would move the sequence forward, which again shows her anticipation of some actions from Kira. What Britney was anxious for becomes visible when Kira finally takes up a turn and refers to the previous look (line 18). Britney immediately and overtly attends to both Kira's verbal and embodied actions. She shifts her posture to elaborate on Kira's gesture (line 18) and jointly completes Kira's utterance by articulating the previous look (line 19). This previous look is identified as something funny or embarrassing, when Britney invites laughter from Kira and the videographer (line 22), thereby enhancing the positive character of the present look.

In sum, through this non-minimal post-expansion, Britney accomplished: 1) emphasizing the improving quality of the haircut and its progress as a continuing composition or service; and 2) getting the customer *actively* involved with this before-after evaluation.

In the example above, Britney engaged in the post-expansion by extending both strands of talk and physical inspection. She began by pointing to a certain part of Kira's hair, making it relevant for Kira to resume a physical inspection. In addition, Britney provided Kira with several opportunities to join the post-expanded verbal strand. However, a stylist may initiate a non-minimal post-expansion and terminate the physical inspection at the same time. The following example has been already introduced in Example 2 of Chapter 4, where we observed the participants' collaborative work in producing multiple SPPs. My focus here is what takes place after the customer (Amy) provides the *second* SPP and completes the physical inspection. Immediately following her SCT in line 7, the stylist (Hanh) expands the service-assessment sequence by asking

whether Amy likes the layering that has been done to her hair. Below is the transcript of the whole scene, including the segment we have previously examined.

[14] The layer ("Amy & Hanh" 00:15-00:24)

1 Hanh: You like it?=
|
((Hanh looks back at the large mirror and
shifts her posture to step backwards))

2 Amy: =Um-hmm.
|
((Amy continues to comb through and look at the back strands of her
hair. Hanh steps back))

3 (1.0) ((Amy continues feeling though her hair, smiling,
while Hanh stands back))

4 Amy: Huu huu
|
((Amy continues to comb and look at the back of her haircut,
and gives a chuckle))

5 (2.8) ((Amy continues to comb and look at the back of her head,
slightly shifting posture to the right))

6 Amy: Yeah!=
|
((Amy shifts her posture toward Hanh, combing her hair))

7 Hanh: =Yeah?
|
((Amy fully turns to and looks at Hanh))

8 Amy: [°Thank you.°
|
((Amy nods twice, smiling))

((Amy looks back at her haircut in the large mirror,
combing her hair to make the layers visible))

9 Hanh: [But you like the layer you think?
| |
((Hanh puts down the cover she's been holding onto the chair that Amy was sitting on)) ((Hahn steps towards Amy and reaches her
hands to the portable mirror that Amy's
been holding))

10 (0.4)

11 Amy: Yeah.
 ((Amy continues to look at the large mirror and slightly nods,
 handing the hand-held mirror to Hanh))

12 (0.3)

13 Hanh: Ye:a:hh.
 ((Hanh smiles and takes the mirror from Amy;
 Amy is still looking at the back of her haircut
 in the large mirror))

Having completed the physical inspection, Amy provides the *second* SPP (line 6). It is followed by Hanh's SCT (line 7), which brings the service-assessment sequence to its closure. In fact, Amy immediately expresses her gratitude, indicating an imminent session completion (line 8). However, Amy's utterance is overlapped with Hanh's question, which asks whether Amy likes the layers that have been created with her hair (line 9). Hanh's verbal action requires a paired action by Amy (providing an answer), therefore initiating a non-minimal post-expansion.

Because Hanh's question calls for Amy's attention to a particular aspect of the new cut, it can possibly lead Amy to a resumption of the physical inspection. As a matter of fact, Amy shifts her gaze to the large mirror and combs the back of her hair as Hanh asks the question. Yet, Hanh prevents Amy from engaging in a further physical inspection by several embodied behaviors. As Hanh begins to voice her utterance in line 9, she sets the haircutting cape onto the chair that Amy was sitting on during the cutting session. Hanh's action here serves two functions: 1) it indicates that the cover and chair are no longer considered relevant in interaction, and the sequence (and the whole haircutting activity) is about to be closed; and 2) it equips Hanh with empty hands, possibly preparing her for receiving the hand-held mirror back from Amy. Thus, as Hanh begins to ask the question, her embodied actions are organized toward the completion of

physical inspection. In fact, Hanh extends her hand to take the mirror back from Amy in the middle of her question in line 9 (Figure 13). By doing so, Hanh eliminates the option for Amy to resume the physical inspection: at least the official one with the aid of two mirrors. This is proved in the next few turns; while Amy tries examining the layers by looking at the back of her haircut in the large mirror as she provides her SPP (line 11), Hanh does not attend to Amy's embodied actions but immediately provides an SCT (line 13). Notice also that her "yeah" this time is more confirming than her earlier one in line 7; the word is stretched, sounding almost like "Yay."



Figure 13: Hanh takes the mirror back from Amy

In a beauty salon setting, where the stylist often has subsequent appointments and/or other customers waiting in a lounge, launching a non-minimal post-expansion can be risky; the customer may reopen the physical inspection, and/or prolong the conversation more than needed. Ultimately, this can threaten their business with other customers. To reduce this risk, Hanh limited the options for the next action by

coordinating the physical inspection towards its closure as she initiated post-expansion. In other words, she *minimized* a non-minimal post-expansion. But then, why did Hanh launch a non-minimal post-expansion in the first place? The possible sequence completion was marked in line 7, and she could have proceeded to a session closure without any problem. What was so important about asking about the layering of her hair?

Noting their consultation at the beginning of their haircutting activity may give an account for Hanh's initiation of expanding the sequence. At that point in time, Amy explained to Hanh that having layers on her long hair was the purpose of her visiting a salon, and although she did not convey this to her stylist (but instead to the videographer), she chose this particular salon simply due to its convenient location. In general, the objective of the haircutting activity is to get a service that has been asked for by the customer. Then, in the service-assessment sequence, the participants determine whether this goal has been achieved. In this case, since the goal of the haircutting activity was specifically identified at its beginning (i.e., to layer her hair), the quality of the service provided should now be determined in terms of the quality of layers. However, during the service-assessment sequence, Amy does not comment on the layers. She looks at and feels through the layers, but she provides a mere "yes" to Hanh's initial question, "Do you like it?" (line 1). Hanh might have referred to the layers by *it*, but it is ambiguous, especially when the stylist in any case often uses this phrase to initiate a service-assessment sequence. Amy successfully produced the "appropriate" SPPs (because the question is a "yes-no" question, an affirmative answer fills the slot) and expressed her overall satisfaction toward the quality of the service. Yet, it is not clear whether the specific objective of the activity has been accomplished or not, nor whether Amy appreciates the particular work that Hanh has done (i.e. creating layers). As a result, Hanh post-expands the sequence to raise the specific work and goal of the session.

In the two examples above, the stylist used talk to initiate a non-minimal post-expansion. While they both achieved bringing up a certain matter about the service (i.e., emphasizing the change of style from before and after the cut, and highlighting the specific service provided), the degree of their expectations toward the extent of the customer's reaction was distinctively different. Britney (in Example 13) did not close the post-expanded sequence until Kira provided more than just affirmative responses. Conversely, Hanh's embodied actions (in Example 14) were oriented toward a sequence completion when post-expanding the talk, and she closed the post-expanded sequence as soon as Amy provided an affirmative response. So then, what made this difference, and which stylist delivered a more professional service?

Recall that Kira was Britney's last customer on this particular day (in fact, Britney, Kira, and the videographer left the salon at the same time). Due to the lack of subsequent appointments, it's possible that she was better able to manage a more lengthy non-minimal post-expansion. Also, seeing that Britney looks at the videographer when she laughs, the existence of a third person (the videographer) might have motivated Britney to hunt for the customer's active actions regarding the matter. On the other hand, the salon that Hanh works for operates on a walk-in basis. While Amy was getting her haircut, there were approximately 10 customers waiting in a lounge. Under this circumstance, from the business point of view, pursuing the customer's satisfaction *and* moving on to the next customer at its earliest timing are expected in the stylists, which Hanh fulfilled by *minimizing* non-minimal post-expansion. To come to the point, the differences in the setting seemed to have impacted the shape of the service-assessment sequence, resulting in a different way of delivering a service.

While the post-expansion is often made relevant when there is some problem with the second speaker's action, we did not find any issue with the customer's actions prior to

the post-expansion. Rather, both Amy and Britney played a professional customer by providing multiple preferred responses (affirmative, latched onto the stylist's FPP, etc.), and effectively coordinating multiple strands. It was only through the stylists' actions in post-expansion that the customer's "missing" and "expected" actions were made relevant. Accordingly, the stylist's decisions on when to initiate a closure, and/or determining when it is good enough to complete, seem to heavily rely on, not only their moment-by-moment coordination of actions in interaction, but also other contextual elements and *their own* expectations in the service-assessment sequence. So who is more satisfied in the end?

5.3 CONCLUSION

So far, we have seen the stylist's professionalized communication skills in their coordination of various actions and multiple strands. In fact, they managed to negotiate a sequence closure so well that not a single stylist showcased in this chapter had to verbalize their request for the customer to terminate or reengage in his/her physical inspection. First, we observed how the stylist activated talk in order to terminate the physical inspection prolonged by the customer. They avoided verbally urging the customers to finish their physical inspection, but used different types of verbal actions, combined with their embodied practices, to move the sequence forward to its closure. We also saw that such stylist's actions were made relevant by not only the rules of sequence organization (e.g., the base sequence has been completed) but also by their contextual knowledge (e.g., a customer already provided overt signs of satisfaction, a customer does not seem to know how to go about using the hand-held mirror and other objects for physical inspection). These contributed to the stylist's interpretation of the customer's behavior of prolonging the physical inspection as "unproblematic." Similarly, the second

set of cases was the stylist's initiation of non-minimal post-expansion, which was largely influenced by the stylist's *own* expectations toward the service-assessment sequence and the local feature of the setting that they were in.

The analyses in this chapter then show us that the negotiation of closure is often monitored by stylists who carry certain expectations in, and professional knowledge of, the service-assessment sequence. Their understanding of the appropriate timing to close the sequence is determined by the knowledge about customers' actions that they have accumulated over time, as well as certain contextual elements, such as the nature and business expectation of a salon. The stylist often tailors the shape of the service-assessment sequence based on these, which in turn caters to *his/her own* satisfaction. While their judgment is often proper, they have to be careful that their professional knowledge or contextual information distract their precise observation of the customer's moment-by-moment actions, as demonstrated in the following example.

This was the *second* service-assessment sequence that day for this customer, Eri. Right after the *first* sequence, which we saw in Example 6 of Chapter 4, Eri had requested her hair to be more “thinned-out.” Having fixed the cut, the stylist, Tia, tells Eri to feel through her hair. Because the quality of the service is now determined by how it *feels*, the service-assessment sequence is conducted without a hand-held mirror.

[15] Failing to post-expand the sequence
("Eri & Tia #2" 00:23-00:38)

- 1 Tia: ((Having dried Eri's hair with a hairdryer, both facing
 a large mirror))
- 2 Tia: Feel through your hair and tell me if it's (thin enough)
 |
 ((Tia stops drying Eri's hair)) ((Eri feels through her hair))
 |
 ((Tia is looking at Eri in a large mirror))

3 (1.9) ((Eri feels through her hair, looking at the large mirror))

4 Eri: Yeah, (0.5) (it is).
 └──────────┘
 ((Eri continues to feel through her hair and looks at the mirror))

5 (2.0) ((Eri continues to feel through her hair,
 also looking at the mirror))

6 Tia: ((Walks behind Eri and takes off the cover))

7 Eri: Thank you.

8 Tia: You're welcome.

Notice that Eri takes more than a second before she produces her utterance “yeah.” When she finally produces it (line 4), her low pitched voice, adding nothing more to her reply than “it is,” even confirms her verbal action as a dispreferred action that indicates downgraded satisfaction or even dissatisfaction. Correspondingly, she keeps feeling through and looking at her hair during and after her utterance (lines 4-5). She then keeps feeling through and looking at her hair until Tia walks behind Eri and begins to take off the cover. She acknowledges this action of Tia as a closing remark, and orients to it by saying “Thank you.” So why did Tia initiate a sequence closure despite Eri’s actions that are clearly problematic? Was this indeed appropriate timing for a sequence completion?

I argue that the situation that they were in – that Tia has just fixed the cut in a way that has been requested by Eri – largely influenced the shape of this sequence. Due to this specific context, Eri’s satisfaction might have been more expected by Tia. In other words, if this was the *first* service-assessment sequence for them on this day, Tia may have interpreted Eri’s actions as hinting at unsatisfactory and might have extended the sequence. It may also be taken into consideration that another customer was waiting for his turn in a lounge. In any case, Tia treated Eri’s reactions as “good enough,” and the new cut was “approved” and the session was “mutually” ended during this sequence.

However, this second session was again unsuccessful, because Eri had to return yet a third time, as soon as Tia finished cutting the next customer's hair. Thus, in the end, Tia's contextual knowledge distracted her from an accurate investigation of when to close the sequence. If Tia had attended to Eri's dispreferred actions here, and/or if Eri did not provide any resources that could be taken as a sign of satisfaction (i.e., the utterance: "yeah it is"), Tia might have post-expanded the sequence, which might have reopened (or continued) the cutting session and avoided the labeling of the new cut as "unsuccessful."

The production of a successful or unsuccessful new haircut comes from much more than a hairstylist's trade skills, but from the way that the service-assessment sequence is organized, especially its closure. The examples in this chapter imply that stylists constantly monitor their customers' actions in deciding when to close the sequence, but they may also rely on their own perceptions, understanding, and knowledge of a customer's actions, and certain situations that the participants find themselves in. The stylist's professional communication skills help to balance, and make sense of, their moment-by-moment observations and their professional and contextual knowledge that may be acquired over time and experience. Without such skills, cosmetology services would greatly contribute to the stylist's own satisfaction, as opposed to that of the customer.

The way the participants dealt with the whereabouts of the portable mirror provided them with a hint of the progressing status of the physical inspection, contributing to the negotiation of sequence closure. Yet, the examples shown throughout this chapter were all from the U.S., where customers are most likely provided with a hand-held mirror. The next chapter attempts to examine the unique feature of the service-assessment sequence in Japan, where the customer does *not* hold the mirror herself/himself. I will show how that may affect the shape of the service-assessment

sequence, and what other practices may become a key element in negotiating the process of the service-assessment sequence.

Chapter 6. Professionalized Head Nods in Japanese Service-Assessment Sequences

6.0 INTRODUCTION

In previous analyses, we observed several Japanese service-assessment sequences, in which the use of head nods was particularly noticeable. Recall Example 3 in Chapter 4 in which a service-assessment sequence took only 6 seconds, but within that short amount of time, the customer and the stylist nodded 6 times each, sometimes overlapping with one another. Head nods often function to do alignment and affiliation work (e.g., Stivers, 2008), and Japanese are known for their overt alignment and agreement with each other in interaction. Does this mean that participants in Japanese service-assessment sequences increase the use of head nods to constantly align and agree with each other as well?

In this chapter, I will take a close look at head nods in Japanese haircutting sessions, and argue that they are indeed vital for the organization of service-assessment sequences in Japan. I will examine two main places at which Japanese participants use head nods distinctively in the sequential context: 1) a mid-sequence point, where the stylist moves a hand-held mirror from one side of the haircut to the other; and 2) the sequence completion point. After that, I will observe two unique cases in which the stylists and the customers use almost no other practice but head nods to complete a service-assessment sequence. I will end the chapter with a discussion of how the use of head nods is *professionalized* in the documented Japanese service-assessment sequences, and reveal a possible difference in the perceptions of “professional communication” between Japan and the U.S. But first, I will briefly examine previous works regarding the use of head nodding.

6.1 FUNCTIONS OF HEAD NODS IN EVERYDAY INTERACTION

The function of head nods in relation to speech has been frequently studied in the past (e.g., Dittmann & Llewellyn, 1968; Hadar, 1983a, 1983b; Hadar, Steiner et al., 1984; Maynard, 1987; Kendon, 2004), and recently, several scholars have begun focusing on the interactional function of the head nods. For example, Stivers (2008) studied the sequential context of head nods in the activity of story-telling. She points out the difference between alignment and affiliation¹⁴, and argues that recipients' head nods contribute to not only the work of alignment but also that of affiliation in the mid-telling position. The recipient's head nods are treated differently from vocal continues by tellers also (e.g., *mm hm, uh huh yeah*). Interestingly, while head nodding is an appropriate action for the recipient to take during storytelling, it is inappropriate if produced at story completion. Stivers observes that recipients and tellers both view "just nodding" at story completion as problematic. As soon as recipients recognize that they are no longer in the mid-telling position, they may add vocal responses. Similarly, a teller may work on eliciting different actions from the recipient, for example by recompleting the story. Through these findings, Stivers calls attention to the separateness of alignment and affiliation, as well as the role of head nods in the sequential contexts.

Head nodding is not only used by recipients, but also by speakers. Speaker head nods may be more frequently seen among Japanese speakers to solicit *aizuchi* (backchannel utterances) from listeners (Szatrowski, 2000; Kita & Ide, 2007). Certainly, this is not the only action done by speaker head nods. Maynard (1987) explores the function of head nods in the turn-taking context, claiming that Japanese conversants use

¹⁴According to Stivers (2008), in the storytelling context, "*alignment* is with respect to the activity in progress", such as when a recipient produces continuers agreeing that the teller is still holding the floor (p. 34). On the contrary, with *affiliation* "the hearer displays support of and endorses the teller's conveyed stance,... taking a stance that matches the teller's stance toward event(s) being described as" (pp. 35-36). A recipient can align without affiliating.

them for a smooth turn-taking negotiation. Similarly, Aoki (Forthcoming) studies speaker head nods by reference to turn. According to her, speakers use head nods to “monitor recipients’ current understanding of the emerging course of activity” (p. 1). By analyzing everyday conversation among Japanese native speakers, she demonstrates how speaker head nods are employed to “explicitly mark the points where recipients’ differentiated actions are relevant” (p.5). For example, when a speaker nods at turn completion, actions like affiliating and aligning are made relevant for the recipient to take. While the speaker’s elicitation is often assisted by other vocal and linguistic devices, such as high-rising terminal pitch and interactional particles, Aoki proves that speaker head nods alone can also obtain recipient responses. She also analyzes the function of speaker head nods in turn-internal prosodic boundaries, by which recipients’ display of reciprocity is made relevant (and irrelevant, when speaker head nods are absent). In addition, her analysis also shows that speaker head nods in the midst of prosodic units often highlight certain pieces of information and thus elicit recipient reactions to it. Thus, both speaker and listener head nods are monitored and treated as a communication modality by interactants.

My study benefits greatly from these previous works. Similar to Stivers’ work, I aim to examine how the use of head nods contributes to sequence organization. Maynard’s and Aoki’s studies on Japanese speaker head nods, although focusing on turn units, also confirm head nods as a reliable communicative practice among Japanese conversants. However, the studies mentioned above focus exclusively on everyday interaction, and unlike previous studies, I aim to reveal how the use of head nods is *professionalized* by looking at several service-assessment sequences in Japan.

6.2 THE USE OF DEEP HEAD NODS AT THE MID-SEQUENCE POINT

As discussed in previous chapters, progressivity of the service-assessment sequence is complicated due to the multiple strands that the participants juggle. Because they engage not only in talk but also physical inspection, participants do not always orient to the preference for progressivity; in fact, suspension of talk for the service of conducting physical inspection is at times relevant. Coordination of multiple strands and negotiation of progressivity then require the participants' constant monitoring of each other's actions. In the U.S., customers themselves hold the hand-held mirror, with which they can indicate the progress of physical inspection. Accordingly, stylists determine the next action to take, such as initiating closure, expanding the sequence, or suspending talk. On the contrary, since Japanese stylists customarily hold up the secondary mirror, their tasks include timing precisely when (and when not) to move, stop, and lower the mirror for the customer. Stylists routinely position a hand-held mirror behind customers who face forward, towards a large mirror. Once a stylist positions the mirror, and a customer adjusts the position of his/her head if necessary, they begin examining the new haircut. Stylists usually follow a certain order to move the mirror; they first show one side of the back of the cut, and then move the hand-held mirror to reflect the other side. In this section, we focus on this moment that I call "a mid-sequence point," where the participants finish the first part of inspection and move on to the next (and last) part of inspection. Thus, the term refers to the mid-point of physical inspection, but not necessarily the mid-point of the talk. I will examine how participants differentiate their head nods from the earlier head nods in a sequence.

The following segment has been taken from the data of a customer, Jun, and her stylist, Ken, and it is their second and final service-assessment sequence.

[16-A] Customer's differentiated head nods
 ("Jun & Ken" 00:28-00:32)

- 1 Ken: ((Holds up the hand-held mirror))
 ((Ken makes a stretched nod))
- 2 Ken: Kaze hika nai you ni shite kuda[sai ne.
 sick catch NEG to LK do please FP
Please make sure not to catch cold.
- 3 Jun: ((Jun nods)) ((Jun nods))
 [Ka hh ze hika na hh i you=
 sick catch NEG to
Not to get cold, right.
 ((Jun nods twice))
- 4 Jun: =ni ne.
 LK FP
- 5 (0.8) ((Jun and Ken are looking at the large mirror))
 ((Jun slightly nods))
- 6 Jun: Hai.
Yes.
- 7 (0.6) ((Ken and Jun both stay still))

As Ken begins physical inspection by holding up a hand-held mirror, he also initiates talk by telling her to be careful to not catch a cold due to her new, shorter haircut (line 2). Jun aligns with Ken's comment by repeating it, also lightly laughing and producing repetitive head nods (lines 3-4). These head nods, conceivably solicited by Ken's head nod in line 2, complement her verbal action of alignment. Jun then briefly looks at the cut (line 5) and immediately provides the *first* SPP¹⁵, slightly nodding (line 6). In Chapter 4, we discussed that the *first* SPP often does not to serve as a valid SPP,

¹⁵ The stylist's verbal FPP is missing here, but as often seen in the service-assessment sequence, his action of holding the mirror functions as an equivalence to the FPP.

but serves to prevent a foreshadowing of an upcoming dispreferred response. Correspondingly, Ken does not produce any verbal or embodied actions following Jun's *first* SPP. Yet, the question is: what is the function of a small head nod that accompanies the *first* SPP? Its meaning is fixed when Jun produces a deeper head nod in response to it, as seen below.

[16-B] Customer's differentiated head nods
("Jun & Ken" 00:32-00:34)

```

7      (0.6) ((Ken and Jun both stay still))

      ((Jun deeply nods))
      |
8      Jun: Ha[i].
      Yes.

      ((Ken slightly nods)) ((Ken moves to left with the mirror))
      |           |
9      Ken: [Daijyoubu desu ka, kore de.
      alright CP Q this O
      Is it okay like this?

```

Following the *first* SPP, neither Ken nor Jun moves the sequence forward (line 7). Jun then provides the *second* SPP (line 8), repeating the same verbal (“*Hai*”) and embodied (a head nod) practices as in her *first* SPP. Yet this time, her utterance is louder, and the head nod is deeper than the ones made earlier. Seeing this, Ken moves the sequence forward by reactivating the strands of talk and physical inspection (line 9).

So, why is this head nod singled out among all the head nods during the sequence? If Jun wanted to mark this action as the *second* and valid SPP, the emphasis on her utterance and the fact that this is produced after the *first* SPP should be enough. Additionally, Jun takes 0.6 seconds between the first and second SPPs, which increases the validity of her second SPP. However, by nodding deeper, thus creating a distinction


```

      ((Jun nods)) ((Jun nods twice))
      |   ┌───┐
3   Jun:  =A, [hai.
           Oh, yes.
                                     ┌───┐ ((Ken slightly nods and pads Jun's hair))
4   Ken:   [Konna kanji na n desu yo:
           like-this impression P P CP FP
           It looks like this, you know.

           ((Jun repetitively nods. Ken retracts his hand from Jun's head))
           |   ┌───┐
5   Jun:   °hai°.
           Yes.

6   (0.6) ((Jun continuously nods three times))

7   (0.8)

8   Jun:   ((Deeply nods))

9   Ken:   ((Moves the mirror from left to right))

```

Similar to Example 16, Jun repetitively nods while responding to Ken's comments (lines 3, 5, and 6), but these head nods do not contribute to the development of physical inspection. Alternatively, Jun's *deep* head nod in line 8, which is made visibly distinctive from the previous head nods, serves to resume physical inspection; Ken moves the mirror from one side to the other upon seeing this. By employing a deep head nod at the relevant position for the *second* SSP, Jun gives it a different function as well: to advance the sequence. At least, it is treated as such by Ken, who then moves ahead with the physical inspection. By singling out this deep head nod, it becomes clear that the earlier, regular head nods produced by Jun were to demonstrate her current involvement in the examination of the certain part of a haircut. Again, we can see that Jun coordinates her head nod behavior with the progression of the sequence, and Ken also attends to her head nods as a sequential production.

At times, however, a customer may break the smooth passage of the mid-sequence point, and a stylist may have to mark another mid-sequence point by using a deep head nod, as seen in the next example. Here, the customer, Seri, recently started going to the stylist, Yasu, who has been profiled in a magazine for his talented skills and his trendy and uniquely-designed salon. In Japan, “clients” supposedly hold a higher status than “service-providers” in almost any business situation, and the distinctions between them are often emphasized through verbal (e.g., the service-provider’s use of polite form and honorifics) and embodied (e.g., bows) means. Moreover, Seri is older than Yasu, which may be another factor of his respectful treatment of his client, due to the cultural and social respect for elders in Japan. Nonetheless, perhaps because of his established status as a stylist, and/or Seri’s excessive modesty, Yasu acts somewhat more familiar than other stylists in general. Seri heavily relies on Yasu’s opinions during the consulting session, and she calls Yasu “*sensei*”, literally translated as “teacher” or “master.” On the day of the recording, his salon was full of customers of various ages despite little space for parking, and because Seri received a perm and coloring along with her trimming, the session progressed over a few hours. Here, we pick up from where Yasu has just finished styling the new haircut, removes a cape from Seri’s shoulders, and walks away to grab a hand-held mirror.

[18-A] Styling the back of the cut
("Seri & Yasu #2" 01:05-01:23)

- 1 ((Yasu walks back with a hand-held mirror and holds it behind Seri))
- 2 ((Seri looks into the large mirror and adjusts the angle of her head))
- 3 Yasu: °Konna kanji.°=
like-this impression
It looks like this.

- ((Seri lightly nods))
 |
 4 Seri: =A, ((deeply nods))
 Oh,
- 5 (0.5) ((Yasu starts moving from left to the right with the mirror
 in his hands))
- ((Yasu steps over to the right;
 Seri slightly looks up at Yasu)) ((Seri turns her head to
 both sides, smiling))
- 6 Seri: Nakanaka (.) jibun de yaru to kou ni: (.)
 not-easily self by-means-of do P this P
 Doing it myself I cannot easily see
- ((Yasu smiles))
 |
- 7 Seri: tabun ushiro hh ga hh dou natteru ka tte
 perhaps back SB how it-is Q P
 how the back of my haircut is,
- ((Seri makes a waving gesture and lightly nods,
 Yasu makes a laughing face))
- 8 Seri: mie nai kahhra heiki hh.=
 see NEG because fine
 so I do not care about it.
- ((Yasu puts the portable mirror aside ((Yasu makes a gesture ((Yasu holds up
 and carries it with his left hand)) of curling hair)) an open palm))
- 9 Yasu: =Demo:, (.) ano, tada kou (.) uchimaki ni (tte iuka, ano)
 but uhm simply like-this curl-inwards P P say Q uhm
 But uhm, simply (you can) curl inwards, like this, I mean, uhm
- ((Yasu again makes a
 gesture of curling hair)) ((Yasu lightly nods))
- 10 Yasu: uchimaki ni [kou bulo: shi[te (moraeru)
 curl-inwards P like-this blow do P if-you-do
 If you curl your hair as you blow it, like this
- ((Seri makes curls with her finger at the
 bottom of the back of her haircut))
- 11 Seri: | [Un. [Sureba=
 Yes. **If I do**
- ((Yasu nods and shifts his gaze from Seri
 to the bottom of Seri's back of haircut))
- 12 Yasu: =Un,=
 Yes,

((Seri repetitively nods))
 13 Seri: =°Konna kan[ji ni.°
 like-this impression P
 (It will become) like this.

((Yasu lightly nods)) ((Seri nods))
 14 Yasu: [You ni, (.) ano: (.) pa:ma mo docchika tte iu to=
 like-this uhm perm too rather P say P
 Like this, uhm and the perm is rather

((Yasu raises his chin))
 ((Yasu shifts his gaze back to Seri in the mirror and makes a gesture))
 ((Yasu makes a gesture))
 15 Yasu: =nemoto jyuushi de anmari kou (yatte) un, >kurukuru<=
 base focused and not-much like-this yes roll-up
 focused on the base of your hair and not so much rolled-up

((Seri nods deeply))
 16 Seri: =°Shite na[i°
 being NEG
 Not (being rolled-up).

Yasu launches the service-assessment sequence by positioning a hand-held mirror behind Seri and engaging in talk (line 3). Seri immediately provides an SPP via vocal (“oh”) and embodied (head nods) actions. Consistent with the early analysis, Seri’s deep head nod in line 4 contributes to the progressivity, as seen in Yasu’s next action in line 5. However, as Yasu moves to the right to show the other side of the cut, Seri deviates from the activity of physical evaluation by joking about caring less about the back of her haircut because she cannot see it when styling on her own (lines 6-8). Yasu aligns with Seri’s joke by making a laughing facial expression, but he also orients to her comments as a statement that needs to be disagreed from a hairstylist’s point of view. Thus, Seri’s comments turn into a trigger for a long insert-expansion; Yasu explains to Seri that the perm on her hair would make it easy for her to curl the back of the cut by herself (lines 9-16). As he does so, he also frees a hand that was previously holding up the hand-held

mirror (line 9), to prepare it for making gestures that complement his talk. Accordingly, the mirror is pushed aside and physical inspection is suspended.

As he engages in the explanations, the strand of talk overrides the strand of physical inspection, and the participants have to somehow get back to the strand of physical inspection, so that the sequence will be moved forward. The use of head nods becomes a noticeable device for doing so. During the insert-expansion, both Yasu and Seri make several head nods, which are not visibly different from one another, in aligning and agreeing with each other. In line 12, Yasu shifts his gaze to directly look at the bottom of the back of Seri's haircut. When he shifts his gaze back to Seri in line 15, he also raises his chin as if he is about to make a deep head nod. Prompted by his gaze-shift and head nod, Seri shows her agreement by preempting the end of his sentence, as well as distinctively nodding (line 16). Seri's action is followed by Yasu's overlapped deep head nod and reactivation of the physical inspection.

[18-B] Styling the back of the cut
 ("Seri & Yasu #2" 01:23-01:25)

				((Seri nods deeply))
16	Seri:	=°Shite na[i°		
		being NEG		
		Not (being rolled-up).		
				((Yasu lightly nods))
		((Yasu nods deeply))	((Yasu steps to the left side))	
17	Yasu:	[<u>Un</u> , shite nai you ni shiteru n [de.		
		yes do NEG like P doing N so		
		Yes, (I) have made it not being like so.		
				((Seri nods))
18	Seri:			[Ha::i.
				Oka::y.

19 Seri: ((Turns her head, looking at the mirror))

Seri's verbal and embodied actions in line 16 are exploited by Yasu to perform a strong agreement. As soon as Yasu sees Seri's deep head nod, Yasu also produces a deep head nod, along with his endorsement of Seri's statement (line 17). The head nod Yasu forms here is noticeably different from earlier head nods; his head goes down so deep and his gaze also goes downwards (Figure 14). Furthermore, when he brings his head back up, he resumes the physical inspection by moving to the left side, which they already examined at the beginning of the sequence. In a regular Japanese service-assessment sequence, the sequence closes at the end of an examination of the other, remaining side. However, because the original mid-sequence point became invalid after their deviated course of action, Yasu solicits a deep head nod from Seri, as well as practices it on his own to mark another mid-sequence point. Accordingly, they now progress to the final set of physical inspection.



Figure 14: Yasu's deep head nod

While the examples in this section were shown to prove that the participants use different degrees of head nods by reference to sequence, the last example of Yasu and Seri demonstrates another function. Notice that Seri's head nod in line 16 and that of Yasu's deep head nod in line 17 partly overlap. We can also see that their concurrent head nods are *prepared* step by step. In line 15, Yasu raises his chin, hinting at the upcoming head nod. Seri then produces a deep head nod. Seri's head nod here is visibly different from previous head nods; it first goes down, then goes up and goes down again to its original position. Aoki distinguishes this type of head nod by naming it "a stretched nod," which is different from a regular nod:

In a regular nod, the head is slightly lowered and raised back immediately. The entire head movement takes place instantly over the production of a few morae of the utterance. In a stretched nod, on the contrary, the head is first raised slightly upward, then lowered, and raised back to the original position (Aoki, Forthcoming, p. 7).

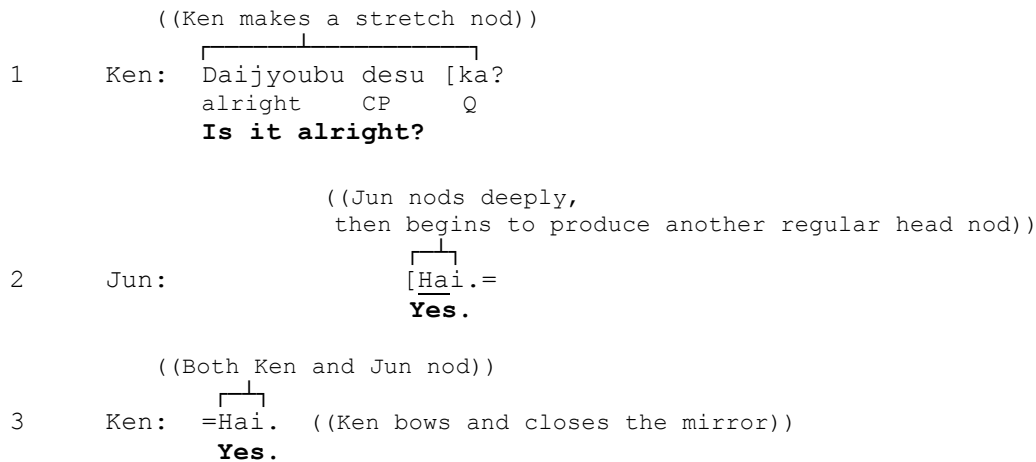
Aoki argues that a speaker's head moving upward allows the recipient to foresee the speaker's imminent stretched head nod. Accordingly, the recipient can overlap his/her head nod with the speaker's head moving downward and back again to the original position. Similarly, Seri's stretched head nod is soon joined by Yasu. While their coordinated head nods functioned to create another mid-sequence point, they also seem to be used to complete the insert-expansion. This phenomenon raises a question of the relationship, if any, between sequence closure and participants' collaborative head nods. In the next section, I will examine participants' synchronized head nods found at sequence completion.

6.3 THE USE OF SYNCHRONIZED HEAD NODS AT SEQUENCE COMPLETION

While participants in the Japanese service-assessment sequences differentiate their use of head nods to communicate a mid-sequence point, they also exercise head

movements in a unique way at sequence completion. To begin with, let us take another look at Jun and Ken, who we met in a longer segment analyzed in Chapter 4. Having inspected the new cut from different angles and receiving Jun's multiple SPPs, Ken now launches the base sequence to finish the service-assessment sequence.

[19] Ken's stretched head nod ("Jun & Ken" 00:14-00:17)]



As Ken initiates the base FPP, Ken raises his chin upward. To be precise, he does so during the utterance “*Daijyoubu desu*” (“It is okay”), and then lowers his chin as he adds a question particle “*ka*” (line 1). Ken's stretched head nod allows Jun to overlap her own head nod. Seeing Ken's initial head movement, Jun makes a regular head nod (line 2). By not producing the exact same action as Ken did (i.e., stretched head nod) and only lowering her head, both participants move downward precisely at once, producing synchronized head nods.

However, that is not the only pair of synchronized head nods found in this segment. In line 3, they produce another set of parallel head nods, along with Ken's SCT. These head nods are most likely elicited by Jun's head movement right at the end of line

2, where she begins to produce another regular head nod. It is not clear to us what motivated Jun to produce another head nod at this point in time. Perhaps Jun was marking the completion point of physical inspection. She may also have been preventing Ken from waiting for another response from Jun, and/or prolonging the physical inspection. No matter what the motivation may have been, Ken uses Jun's action as another opportunity to produce a synchronized head nod. Accordingly, they synchronize not just a head nod, but *a series of actions* at sequence-completion. One more case in point should be shown to secure this observation.

The following segment was recorded in one of the most famous prefecture-wide salons in Japan. The salon is composed of two rooms, one for men and another for women, and operates on both a walk-in and appointment basis. A customer, Ikue, walked in to get her hair trimmed on this day. It was not clear whether she was a regular or first customer, but judging from how she and her stylist, Emi, communicated with each other, it would appear that they are not familiar with one another. They talked only about haircutting matters, and used polite language throughout the session. They talked only when necessary, and no personal conversation or small talk was seen during the session. Instead, Ikue continued to read magazines through the cutting segment. Having finished the cutting, Emi begins a service-assessment sequence by asking Ikue whether the length of her bangs is okay. After receiving Ikue's approval, Emi proceeds with the sequence by holding up a portable mirror behind Ikue, and they exchange a few yes-no questions and answers. Once they inspect and agree on the quality of the service (and view the cut from both sides) Emi launches a base FPP.

[20] Emi's stretched head nod ("Ikue & Emi" 00:04-00:17)

- 1 Emi: Daijyoubu des[hou ka.
 right CP Q
 Is it okay?
 └──────────┘
 ((Emi makes a stretch nod))
- 2 Ikue: [Hai.
 Yes.
 |
 ((Ikue distinctively nods))
- 3 (0.3)
- ((Ikue nods))
 └──┘

4 Emi: Hahhi suhhimasehn.
 Yes Excuse me
 Alright excuse me.
 └──┘ |
 ((Emi nods)) ((Emi bows and puts the mirror away;
 Ikue looks to the left, smiling, and looks down))

As Emi produces the base FPP, she raises her head, predicting her imminent head nod (line 1). Having seen that, Ikue overlaps her SPP and produces a regular head nod along with her SPP (line 2). Accordingly, their heads simultaneously move downwards. Again, Emi's stretched head nod successfully leads the participants to produce a synchronized head nod. Similar to Example 21, Ikue and Emi coordinate another set of synchronized head nods during the stylist's SCT (line 4). After a slight pause in line 3, Ikue begins to move her head downwards. Almost at the same time, but slightly after Ikue's initiation in another head nod, Emi produces the SCT and an overlapped head nod (Figure 15). Similar to Jun in Example 20, it is not possible to completely explain why Ikue produced another head nod after her base SPP. It can be a re-completion of her SPP (note the 0.3 seconds of silence in line 3), or she may have in fact foreseen Emi's upcoming SCT and a head nod, and thus prepared for another synchronized head nod. In

any case, Emi manages to overlap her head nod, which results in a synchronization of a series of actions.



Figure 15: A synchronized head nod at SCT

By now, we can clearly see that the participants' first synchronized head nod is instigated by the stylist's stretched head nod and the customer's close monitoring of the speaker's head movement. We also saw that the customer's slight head movement after the first set of synchronized head nods produced another visible action in sync. Yet, the SCT follows after the SPP anyway, and it is possible that the stylist produced another head nod *anyway* along with his/her SCT, but not necessarily to collaborate with the customer's head nod. This may be especially so, when their second set of synchronized head nods happens almost at the same time, as seen in the example above. Yet, the next example demonstrates that the participants indeed organize their head nods for the sake of synchronization.

The following segment is a part of Example 3, seen previously in Chapter 4, where we examined a customer, Leia, and her professional use of multiple SPPs. Having gone through a pre-expansion sequence with her multiple SPPs, Leia marks the completion of physical inspection by shifting her posture and gaze; she leans on the chair and looks up at Tomo. Seeing that, the stylist, Tomo, now launches a base sequence.

[21] No head nod at SCT ("Leia & Tomo" 00:10-00:12)

- 1 Tomo: >Daijyoubu?<=
(Is it) Okay?
|
((Tomo smiles, lightly nods, and shifts gaze from
the large mirror to Leia))
- 2 Leia: =Daijyoubu.
Okay.
└───┘
((Leia and Tomo simultaneously nod. Leia faintly smiles))
- 3 Tomo: Ha::i. ((Tomo puts away the portable mirror))
Yes.

As you can see, Tomo uses a small head nod instead of a stretched one as he asks Leia a question (line 1). However, this head nod is also different from a regular nod; Tomo first slightly raises his chin and brings it back to its original position, indicating the possibility of moving it downward. So, in a way, it is a “half” nod. Furthermore, Tomo shifts his gaze from the large mirror to Leia at this point, which increases the chance for Leia’s prompted visible action to occur along with her response. Evidently, Leia produces a head nod along with her SPP in line 2, which is overlapped by Tomo’s downward head movement. In the previous examples, the customers made another head nod following their synchronized head movements during their base SPP, allowing another set of synchronized head nods to occur during the stylist’s SCT. Leia, however, exits from the

mutual gaze during this synchronized head nod, and does not make another head nod. Now, if the stylist is to habitually produce another head nod to complement his/her SCT anyway, Tomo would have done so. Yet, seeing Leia's gaze shift and no sign of imminent head nod, Tomo also immobilizes his head as he provides the SCT (line 3). Here, by *not* producing a head nod at the time of SCT, Tomo achieves a series of synchronized embodied actions.

This example implies that the practice of head nods *per se* is not what the participants are synchronizing, but the overall visible actions. A synchronization of embodied actions is so valued that it may overrule the coordination of verbal actions, as seen in the next example.

Here, Jun is getting a haircut from another stylist, Tae, who owns a small salon close to downtown Maebashi. Jun started to visit Tae for her haircutting several months before this session was recorded. They share some common traits, such as age and hobby (ballroom dancing), and they chatted throughout the cutting session about various matters such as family and dance. This service-assessment sequence goes rather quickly because it is their first and preliminary service-assessment sequence between the cutting session and styling session. It is here that we find a few synchronized head nods.

[22] Mismatched SPP ("Jun & Tae" 00:09-00:15)

1	((Tae opens up a hand-held mirror behind Jun, and Jun looks up in the large mirror in front of her.))
	((Jun nods)) ((Jun lightly nods))
2	Jun: A, [(.) hai. Oh, yes.

((Tae slightly moves the mirror from left to right))

3 Tae: [Konna kanji de[su.
 Like-this impression CP
 It looks like this.

((Jun nods deeply))

4 Jun: [(Hai)
 Yes.

((Tae makes a stretched nod))

5 Tae: Daijyo[ubu desu ka.
 alright CP Q
 Is it alright?

((Jun makes a stretched nod)) ((Jun nods))

6 Jun: [A, sukkiri shi mashi ta, [hai].
 Oh clear/refreshed CP PAS yes
 Oh, (I feel) refreshed, yes.

((Tae nods))

7 Tae: [Ha:i.
 Yes.

As soon as Tae holds up a hand-held mirror behind Jun, Jun shows an understanding of the ongoing event via verbal and embodied means (line 2), which is overlapped with Tae's comment that further solicits Jun's service-assessment (line 3). Seeing that Jun marks the completed status of physical inspection via a deep head nod in line 4, Tae launches a base sequence accompanied with a stretch head nod (line 5). In the middle of Tae's FPP, Jun starts providing another service-assessment by saying that she feels refreshed (it can also mean that the haircut looks refreshed and neat, but it is not clear which she meant because the sentence has no overt subject). Her assessment here is not linguistically paired with Tae's yes-no question. In fact, Jun herself does not treat it as an appropriate SPP, and provides the base SPP separately (*hai* in line 6). Nevertheless, Tae treats the comment as a base SPP by inserting an SCT right after Jun's comment, as

seen in line 7. Was Tae in a hurry, anticipating the earliest opportunity to insert the SCT, or was Jun's comment indeed a fitting paired action in this context?

Note that Tae inserts the SCT right after their synchronized head nodding behavior. Like other stylists, Tae engages in a stretched head nod with the base FPP (line 5). Jun also slightly raises her chin as she produces her utterance (line 6), which results in a synchronized head nod (Figure 16). In other words, while Jun's comment was not linguistically paired with Tae's question, Jun's embodied actions were perfectly matched with that of Tae's. Tae treats this collaborative action as an appropriate second paired action, moving the sequence forward with the SCT. Here, the synchronized visible action overrode the organization of adjacency pair, conquering the sequence organization.



Figure 16: A synchronized head nod

On the other hand, when the sequence does not end with the participants' synchronized visible behavior, the participants may use talk to create another opportunity

for producing a synchronized embodied action. In the following case, Tae and another customer of her, Yuma, miss synchronize their head nods.

[23] Yuma's post-expansion ("Yuma & Tae #1" 00:03-00:10)

- 1 ((Tae holds the hand-held mirror behind Yuma,
and Yuma raises her head a little))
- 2 Yuma: [A,
Oh,
- ((Tae moves the mirror from right to left))
- 3 Tae: [°Konna kanji de.°=
Like-this impression P
Like this.
- ((Yuma nods)) ((Yuma raises her chin upwards))
- 4 Yuma: =Hai. A, suk[kiri shimashi ta.
yes oh clear/refreshed CP PAS
Yes, oh, (it looks) neat.
- ((Tae lightly nods))
- 5 Tae: [Daijyoubu desu ka.=
alright CP Q
Is it alright?
- ((Yuma deeply lowers head to complete the nod))
- 6 Yuma: =Hai.=
Yes.
- ((Tae nods))
- 7 Tae: =H[ai.
Yes.
- ((Yuma raises her chin upwards)) ((Yuma lowers her chin to complete the nod))
- 8 Yuma: [Konna kanji wo, (.) hhh, [kibou °shite ita no de.°
like-this impression OB hope do PAS P so
I was hoping for a look like this, so.
- ((Tae nods))
- 9 Tae: [Ha:i. ((Tae closes the mirror))
Ye:s.

In line 5, Tae slightly nods as she produces the base FPP. Yuma sees Tae's head movement and also initiates in a stretched head nod, but Tae's head nod is completed before Yuma completes one in line 6. Regardless, Tae moves on to the SCT, nodding (line 7), during which Yuma post-expands the sequence by adding an assessment. Note that Yuma uses a micropause and a little laughter when she completes raising her head in the middle of line 8. This stopping point prepares Tae to produce a synchronized head nod, which is what eventually takes place (line 9). Thus, through post-expansion, the participants finally achieve a synchronization of bodily behavior and valid proof for successful sequence completion; Tae closes the portable mirror immediately after the synchronized head nod, even before Yuma finishes her sentence in line 8.

This section summarized the participants' collaborative actions through the use of head nods at the time of sequence completion. There, the participants collaborated in producing synchronized embodied actions, and at times, they even modified the shape of a service-assessment sequence. Before concluding the chapter, I will look at two unique cases, in which customers largely rely on head nods to progress, and to conclude, the service-assessment sequence.

6.4 ACTING AS A CUSTOMER THROUGH HEAD NODS

Among the data collected in Japan, I came across two unique interactions. One was the case of a customer, Kana, a shy 5-year-old girl at the time of the recording who speaks very little to anyone other than her family members. Another unique case that I will elaborate on, is a service-assessment sequence between a Japanese stylist, who speaks little to no English, and a foreign customer, Minh, who speaks very little Japanese. In these two cases, the use of linguistic devices is much more limited than in sessions we have observed previously. Nevertheless, they successfully mobilize and close the

sequence by actively incorporating head nods in their actions, and without linguistic practices, both Kana and Minh successfully embody a role as “the customer.”

Kana’s session with her stylist, Ai, was filmed in a small salon in a rural area of Gumma Prefecture, where Kana’s mother is from. Kana and her mother, whom I will refer to as Coco, currently live in the capitol city of Maebashi, and drove an hour to visit the salon on this day. Two different stylists serve Kana and Coco simultaneously, and both mother and daughter get their hair cut and permed. As previously mentioned, Kana is extremely shy and does not usually speak to anyone but her family. Thus, while it was Kana’s own desire to come to the salon to get her hair permed, Coco managed the consulting with Kana’s stylist alone at the beginning of the session, explaining what Kana was wanting from her visit. Throughout the session, which took a few hours, Kana did not talk to anyone but occasionally to Coco, and at times Ai asked Coco to see if Kana was doing okay. While Coco was still getting her hair permed alongside her daughter (Figure 17), Ai finishes the styling of Kana’s new haircut, and announces the completion, which leads into a discussion between Ai and Coco about how best to style Kana’s new cut. Ai then picks up a hand-held mirror and opens it up behind Kana. It is a long segment, so we will examine how the sequence progresses step by step.



Figure 17: Coco, Kana, and Ai

[24-A] Kana's head nods ("Kana & Ai" 00:15-00:20)

- ((Ai bends down to adjust the
position of the hand-held mirror))
- 1 Ai: Konna kanji desu.
 Like-this impression CP
 It looks like this.
- 2 (0.3) ((Kana and Ai face the large mirror;
 Coco is directly looking at Kana))
- ((Ai nods, stops the head lowered))
- 3 Ai: Mieru?
 Can see
 Can you see?
- 4 (0.5) ((Kana looks at Coco))

```

((Kana shifts gaze from Coco
  to the large mirror))
      |
((Coco positions open palm hands around her face,
  looking at the large mirror))
      |
5  Coco: Ushiro mie ta, Jibun no kami no ushiro.
      Back see PAS self PS hair LK back
      Were you able to see the back? The back of your haircut.

6  (0.6) ((Coco looks at Kana))

      ((Coco points to the large mirror in front of Kana,
        shifting gaze between the mirror and Kana))
          |
          | ((Kana looks toward Coco))
7  Coco: Mae to.=
      front P
      Together with the front mirror.

      ((Ai nods))
          |
8  Ai: =Mieta?=  

      Were you able to see?

```

Ai begins the service-assessment sequence by initiating talk and physical inspection in line 1. She says, “*Konna kanji desu*” (“it looks like this”), which is a statement that stylists often make to initiate a service-assessment sequence. Seeing no reaction from Kana (line 2), she soon modifies her FPP into a yes-no question, “*Mieru?*” (“can you see?”), which specifically solicits Kana’s yes-no answer, or just a head nod, which is easier for Kana to perform (line 3). If there is no response to the question, showing some sign of engaging in physical inspection can also be a relevant action for Kana to make here. Nevertheless, Kana engages in neither action, but instead, looks at Coco (line 4). Coco then asks Kana if she was able to see the back of her haircut, using gestures to point at the targeted object Kana should be examining (line 5), but Kana still does not show a sign of understanding the ongoing event, nor the relevant actions to be taken (line 6). Coco then elaborates on the instructions via talk and embodied actions (line 7), which is still not attended to by Kana, who continues only to gaze at Coco. The

situation has become problematic, because the sequence does not progress without the customer's approval. In the next moment, Ai repeats the same question to Kana, except that this time it is with a past tense and a stretched nod (line 8). However, by observing Kana's behavior throughout the session and during this sequence, anyone could easily envision that Kana will not respond to Ai's questions. In addition, by the time Ai makes the utterance, Kana is already in the process of shifting her head and gaze toward Coco. While the combination of a question and a stretched head nod often elicits the recipient's response and overlapped head nod, here, Ai's actions again fail. Yet, Ai's work does not end in vain, as seen in Coco's actions that follow.

[24-B] Kana's head nods ("Kana & Ai" 00:21-00:23)

```

      ((Ai nods))
      |
      +-----+
      |
8   Ai:  =Mieta?=  

      Were you able to see?

      ((Coco nods))
      |
      +-----+
      |
9   Coco: =Mieta?  

      Were you able to see?

      ((Ai slides the mirror from right to left))
      |
      +-----+
      |
      | ((Coco and Ai simultaneously nod))
      |
      |
      | ((Kana nods at Coco, and then looks back at front and down))
      |
      |
10  Ai:  hhh  Mieta? Hhh  

      Hhh, you were able to see, hhh.

11  (1.0) ((Ai keeps holding up the mirror))

```

As soon as Coco sees Ai's actions in line 8, she reproduces the same verbal and embodied actions (line 9), and that is when Kana finally provides her SPP by producing a

head nod (line 10). It is doubtful that Kana actually was aware of the ongoing event, but Coco's use of head nod helped Kana see the relevant action to be taken here: repeating Coco's (and thereby Ai's) head nodding. In the service-assessment sequence, where the customer's satisfaction is pursued, just mimicking someone's visible action should not be enough to end the session. However, Kana's head nod is transformed into an appropriate action; as soon as Kana makes the head nod, both Coco and Ai provide the SCT. Coco produces multiple small head nods immediately after Kana's head nod. Notice also that Ai treats Kana's head nod as a response to Ai's *own* question by providing an SCT in line 10 and nodding. As a result, Coco and Ai produce a set of synchronized head nods in reacting to Kana's head nod. Their nods are also slightly overlapped with Kana's nod, appearing as if three participants nod in unison.

Yet, the service-assessment sequence is yet to be completed. The first question only asked whether or not Kana was able to see the back of her haircut, but not whether she liked it. Furthermore, Ai has just moved the mirror from right to left, by which the action of providing another service-assessment based on the new information gathered from the different angle, has been made conditionally relevant.

[24-C] Kana's head nods ("Kana & Ai" 00:22-00:26)

```

11      (1.0) ((Ai keeps holding up the mirror; Kana looks forward))
          |
          | ((Coco nods))
          |
12      Coco: I:i?
              Okay?
          |
          | ((Kana looks at Coco))
          |
          | ((Ai nods))
          |
13      Ai:  Ii desu [ka?
            good CP   Q
              Does that look okay?

```

```

((Kana and Coco nod, looking at each other))
14    Coco:    [Kiniii tta?=  

               like PAS  

               Did you like it?

               ((Ai nods))
15    Ai:      =°Un.°

16    (0.7) ((Ai closes the hand-held mirror;  

            Coco smiles and nods, looking at Kana))

```

This time, it is Coco who first initiates talk by asking Kana whether her styling looks okay (line 12). She also nods along with her utterance, making a head nod by Kana as the next relevant action. At this point in time, Ai also repeats the same question in a polite form, nodding (line 13). By doing so, Ai can treat Kana's following reaction (to Coco's actions in line 12) as *the answer to her own question* as well, thus increasing the validity of Kana's actions in a given context (the service-assessment sequence is principally conducted between the stylist and the customer). Moreover, by producing a head nod with her utterance, Ai successfully overlaps her head nod with that of Kana's. In fact, everyone's nods are somewhat orchestrated again, since Coco also nods again along with her modified question in line 14, as soon as Kana looks at her (Figure 18). By the time she utters this question, Kaya already begins producing a head nod. As a result, Kana's head nod here serves as a valid response to: 1) Coco's first question in line 12; 2) Ai's question in line 13; and 3) Coco's second/modified question in line 14. Its validity is proved by the following actions of Coco and Ai. Coco nods and smiles (line 16), and Ai provides an SCT (line 15).



Figure 18: Everyone nods

Head nodding is the only action that Kana actively produces in this sequence, and Coco and Ai coordinated their actions around Kana's nodding so that they serve as *a customer's actions*. Coco, knowing the system of the service-assessment sequence, effectively aided the progression of the sequence by using and soliciting Kana's head nods. In the meantime, Ai also kept herself involved in the sequence by using talk and head nods. She also coordinates her actions around Kana's reactions (i.e., head nods) to Coco's, in order to make them also appear to be the responses to Ai's questions. Furthermore, Ai, Coco, and Kana's head nods even managed to be produced at almost the same time, which contributed to a sense of agreed and satisfactory sequence completion.

The next segment is another unique case recorded in Japan, where the customer and the stylist do not speak each other's language. The customer, Minh, is an American-English native speaker, and the stylist, Ken, is a Japanese native speaker. At the beginning of and during the haircutting session, Minh and Ken communicated through the videographer, Saya, who is also a native Japanese speaker and Minh's fiancée. During

the final service-assessment sequence, however, Saya was not involved but Minh and Ken carried out the sequence on their own.

[25] Non-Japanese-speaking customer
("Minh & Ken" 01:35-01:51)

```

1      Ken:  ((Takes a hand-held mirror and places it behind Minh))
2
3      (0.7)
4
5      Ken:  ((slightly nods))
6
7      Minh: °Nn° ((Minh repetitively nods, which is joined by
                  Ken's repetitive head nods))
8
9      ((Ken moves the hand-held mirror from left to right;
        Minh murmurs indistinctively, smiling))
10
11     ((Minh aligns with Ken's movement by adjusting the position of his head))
12
13     (1.3) ((Minh and Ken continue looking at the large mirror))
14
15     (4.9) ((Minh touches the side of his haircut
              while Ken keeps holding the mirror))
16
17     Minh: °Yes.°
18           └─┘
19           ((Minh puts down his hand and nods deeply))
20
21     Ken:  °Daijyoubu.°
22           └─┬─┘
23           (It is) Okay.
24           └─┬─┘
25           ((Ken makes a stretched nod))
26           |   |
27           ((Minh nods)) ((Ken starts folding the mirror))
28
29     ((Minh and Ken bow concurrently))

```

Ken initiates an evaluation by unfolding a hand-held mirror (line 1), and then slightly nods (line 3). His embodied actions are followed by Minh's small repetitive nods (line 4). Ken soon overlaps with Minh by also producing repetitive nods and then slides the mirror from the left to the right (line 5). Solely through the use of head nods, they

move the physical inspection forward to the next step, which is the evaluation of the other side of the haircut. There, Minh spends approximately 6 seconds looking at and touching his hair (lines 7-8), and then nods deeply while speaking softly, “yes.” Minh’s verbal and embodied actions are treated as a final SPP by Ken, who says “*Daijyoubu*,” meaning “okay,” and starts folding the portable mirror. As Ken utters the SCT, Ken also lifts his chin upward, indicating a stretch head nod to come. As soon as Minh sees Ken’s head movement, Minh nods once again. As a result, the sequence was organized by their close monitoring of each other’s head movements, successfully leading it to a completion.

This was Minh’s first haircutting experience in Japan, but with the aid of Ken’s foreseeable embodied actions and his own careful observations, Minh successfully achieved the role of customer. As a matter of fact, he even managed to bow at *precisely* the same moment as Ken bowed (Figure 19) in line 11. In Japan, people bow as they initiate and/or end encountering in everyday life, and during the haircutting interaction, they often bow to each other at the end of the activity, and/or at the boundaries of different sessions. Being somewhat familiar with Japanese culture, and also seeing Ken’s action of starting to fold the mirror, Minh bows, which happens concurrently with Ken’s bow. An even closer look at this moment verifies that neither Minh nor Ken looked at each other when starting to make their bows, but instead, they both begin to move their head downward perfectly in unison. Interestingly, they also brought their head back upwards at the same time, and possibly might not have seen each other’s bowing action. Regardless, they both work on a departure when they bring their head back to its original position. Overall, not only is the service-assessment sequence silently and smoothly conducted, but the session-closing sequence is as well.



Figure 19: A synchronized set of bows

The examples of Kana and Minh then show that customers can achieve their tasks via the effective use of head nods. However, there was a fundamental difference between these two cases. Minh worked on performing the role of a customer by actively using head nods, display his understanding of the context that he was in. However, we cannot say that Kana was fully aware of the situation that she was in. Rather than producing head nods as meaningful actions as a customer, Kana probably practiced them simply to respond to Coco. However, because of the stylist's *professional*, interactional work, Kana's mere head movements transformed into relevant actions in a given context; they were treated as responses to the stylist's questions, thus qualifying for service-assessments.

6.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined how participants in Japanese service-assessment sequences use head nods. In earlier sections, we examined a few examples of head nods used at the mid-sequence point. While head nods were frequently used within a turn, such as a stylist's head nod at the end of his/her turn, it was noticeable that the participants differentiated the degree of head nods at the mid-sequence point, which showed its function by reference to sequence. Not only customers, but we also saw a stylist who employed a deep head nod at a mid-sequence point, which also was an insert-sequence completion point. We would not have understood the precise functions of differentiated head nods without looking at them *in a sequential context*.

The participants' synchronized head nods at sequence completion also intensified a unique characteristic of the service-assessment sequence in Japan. There, we found that participants engaged in not only a set of synchronized head nods elicited by a stylist's stretched head nod, but a series of synchronized actions. In some examples, participants synchronized a few sets of head nods, and in the other example we saw that a stylist withheld a head nod at the time of producing an SCT when a customer showed no sign of another head nod to be made. Either way, the participants ended the sequence with a set of synchronized behavior, and this seems to be a vital feature of a sequence completion in Japanese service-assessment sequences. Indeed, when they failed achieving synchronization, a customer re-completed a sequence and created another opportunity to synchronize their head nods.

Head nods play such a powerful communicative role that the participants in the last set of examples successfully complete the whole sequence almost without any other kinds of actions. Yet, why does it have to be a head nod among all the other communicative actions? The most apparent reason is that moving one's head is one of the

more useful (and convenient) communicative practices available in Japanese salons. Clients remain in their chairs with hands usually set on their laps since they are not commonly asked to touch their hair in the process of getting it cut, as well as during the service-assessment sequence itself. In addition to the unavailability of a hand-held mirror in their possession, they cannot practice a noticeable gaze-shift either. While they can still shift their gaze from their new haircut to the stylist (as customers in U.S. often do when lowering the hand-held mirror), both the haircut and the stylist in the Japanese service-assessment sequences are reflected in the large mirror, possibly making the customer's gaze shift between them less visible. Similarly, stylists' hands, holding a portable mirror, are often too occupied to make gestures, and they cannot exercise clear gaze shift for the same reason as that of the customer.

Not only was there a smaller repertoire for embodied practices in Japan, but Japanese participants in the present study also used fewer vocal actions than those used by U.S. participants. In the U.S., the service-assessment sequence is where a customer's clear display of satisfaction toward the quality of the service is pursued. Stylists often ask customers to examine their new cut not just by looking at it, but also by touching it. They also work on elevating the customer's satisfaction by verbal (e.g., explaining the work that has been done on a customer's hair, complimenting the new cut, post-expanding the sequence by asking additional questions, etc.) and embodied (e.g., fixing the hairstyle in the middle of a service-assessment sequence) actions. Accordingly, customers are often led to provide more actions than just saying "yes" in communicating their satisfaction. Various cases of sequence closure in the U.S. include a participants' use of positive assessments and comments. In the examples found in the previous chapter, several customers explicitly reacted to a new haircut by actively using various verbal practices.

In contrast, the practices used by the participants in Japan do not seem as expressive, often making assessments simply by saying *hai* (yes), and rarely verbalizing their overt contentment to the stylist or others. A part of this may be due to the cultural background of Japan, where people are often deliberately modest about themselves. If they praise the new haircut, it may imply a vain satisfaction with their appearance and themselves, which may be dissonant with the cultural norm. In fact, out of all of the sessions filmed in Japan, not a single customer said, “it’s cute” to their stylists which is a phrase often used by customers in the U.S. Rather, Japanese customers often say “*sukkiri shimashita*,” meaning it feels refreshed and/or looks neat, which does not necessarily refer to its visually aesthetic quality. While I did find one Japanese customer who said, “I look good in the new cut,” she laughed during the utterance, making it a joke. From this example, we can see that some Japanese customers may not consider praising the new cut relating to their own appearance as appropriate behavior. Likewise, stylists’ verbal actions are not as abundant. They barely provide explanation for the new cut (unlike stylists in the U.S., who often pre-expand the sequence by providing explanations for their stylistic decisions), nor provide compliments or positive assessments regarding the quality of the service, but instead utter brief sentences such as “*konna kanji*” (“it looks like this”) and “*daijyoubu desuka?*” (“is it okay?”). It can be said that such behavior, seen in the sessions collected in Japan, may also come from a cultural understanding of modest caution; praising the quality of their own service can indicate flattering of one’s own skills, which may be perceived as an arrogant and inappropriate action to take for a Japanese, and for a service-provider.

In such an environment, with seemingly limited embodied and verbal practices, head nods may become a “handy” communicative resource, as seen in the differentiated degrees of head nods for organizing a sequence. However, that is not the only motivation

for the active usage of head nods, and this is where we may find a significant difference between Japan and the U.S., in people's perceptions toward "professional communication" in the context of beauty salons.

While the participants in the U.S. aim for an agreement on the quality of a service and the customer's (and often the stylist's own) satisfaction through a service-assessment sequence, in Japan, the service-assessment sequence is rather catered to achieve a collaborative action between the participants. As a matter of fact, the pursuit of collaborative actions may be the motivation for the stylist to hold the mirror for the customer. By doing so, they are both reflected in a large mirror in front of them, which makes it easy for them to observe each other's current and imminent bodily movements. Moreover, because they are facing towards the same direction and their perceptions are exactly the same in the large mirror, it is easy to coordinate paralleled bodily movements. Yet, among various visible actions, head nods are one of the available and exceptionally easy actions to synchronize in Japanese service-assessment sequences. The movement is relatively easy to expect; once a person's head lifts up, it will come down, and once down, it will come back up. Even in the cases with a customer who is not as collaborative (like Kana in Example 24), a stylist can effectively coordinate his/her own head movement to achieve "synchronization."

A familiar Japanese expression, "*a-un no kokyuu*," comes to mind, which means literally that if one person breathes out, another breathes in. This refers to the perfect timing of actions conducted by two or more participants in an activity without talk (Sanseido, 2004). However, the expression does not indicate the perfect timing of the visible/auditable actions per se, but that of the participants' inner feelings. In other words, their well-coordinated actions are *the result of* their harmonized feelings. We cannot prove that all participants in the Japanese service-assessment sequence had similar minds,

but they evidently, and perhaps reversely, worked on “*a-un no kokyuu*” by careful monitoring each other’s head movements. By synchronizing their visible actions, they achieved an elucidation of *their feelings as one and the same*. It is this system that creates a satisfactory feeling among participants, thus a perfect way to end a professional service encounter.

Nonetheless, there are many commonalities between the service-assessment sequence in Japan and the U.S., and one of them is to avoid making requests. The customers seen in this chapter used a deep head nod instead of asking the stylist to move the mirror. In Chapter 5, we also saw that stylists avoid making requests to customers for terminating their physical inspections. So, what is so frightening about making a request in the service-assessment sequence? And, how do the participants go about this action when necessary? The next chapter examines how participants deal with the problematic notion of making, and accepting, requests. We will also focus on how participants organize the sequence to minimize the occurrence of possible problems that may arise from conducting the action of making a request.

Chapter 7. Who is *the* “Expert”?: Professionalized Negotiation for the Revision of a Haircut

7.0 INTRODUCTION

At times, it is a challenging task for beauticians to balance their professional identities as experts and also provide emotional work that tends to their clients' emotional needs. As discussed in Chapter 2, the significant need for emotional work in beauty salons may override other professional tasks, such as providing a stylist's own, expert opinion. In that case, stylists may have to yield what customers want rather than what they, as professional beauticians, think is right (see pp. 21-26 of this dissertation for more discussion on this matter). Such dilemma on the stylist's part is especially relevant in the service-assessment sequence, where customers are allowed to provide their frank opinion on the cut and styling, and furthermore, ask for the additional labor of making revisions to it, if necessary. The need to satisfy and pamper their clients by aligning and empathizing with them is relevant in the pursuit of a satisfactory closure to the session. From that point of view, stylists, as service-providers, may want to agree with and immediately act upon the clients' suggestions and requests. In spite of this, a stylist also needs to maintain the role of an *expert*. Simply yielding to the customer's (novice) opinion can threaten the stylist's professional identity as a beauty expert.

In this chapter, I will inquire how participants go about managing the problematic moments of requesting and making a revision to the new cut during the service-assessment sequence. How do they maintain their identities as expert and novice *and* the healthy relationship of service-provider and client? I argue that the stylist and customer frequently work on formulating the event of fixing a cut as a *mutual* decision between them. In doing so, they balance their expert/novice responsibilities and the emotional

work for a pursuit of a client's satisfaction. To start, I will look at cases in which the participants organize their verbal and embodied actions to build a joint decision to fix the cut. Next, I will examine two cases wherein a participant fails to collaborate with others and make the decision mutual. The analysis of these deviant cases will further confirm the tendency of participants to collaborate with one another at a time of problematic events, but will also allude to the differing types of professional knowledge held by participants.

7.1 FIXING A HAIRCUT AS A MUTUAL DECISION

A customer's request for revisions may imply his/her dissatisfaction with the quality of service. Then, not only may the stylist's professional identity be threatened, but the customer also may have to undergo the social discomfort of face-to-face personal criticism. Therefore, both customer and stylist carefully handle the event of fixing the haircut, and they renovate the event into a *mutual* decision by using various verbal and embodied actions.

For example, a stylist may immediately agree with the customer's assessment that indicates a request. Here, a stylist Nita, whom we saw in Example 5 (Chapter 4) and Example11 (Chapter 5) in her interactions with her customer, Kim, is now cutting the hair of Kim's boyfriend, Chaz. Like Kim, Chaz meets Nita for the first time but converses with her about various everyday matters throughout their cutting session. During the styling session, Nita shows Chaz how to style the cut for different occasions, specifically for going-out and for going to work. As Nita finishes styling Chaz' new haircut, she looks at Chaz through the reflection in a large mirror in front of them and asks if he likes the cut.

[26] It's not work yet ("Chaz & Nita" 00:27-00:37)

- 1 ((Nita almost finishes styling, and shifts her gaze from Chaz' haircut to Chaz in the large mirror))
- 2 Nita: How are you liking it? Do you [like it?
|
((Nita arranges the back of Chaz' haircut, looking at him in the large mirror))
|
((Nita nods))
- 3 Chaz: [It's good. (.) °Yea.°
|
((Chaz pulls his chin to see the top of his cut; Nita nods and walks off the camera))
- 4 (0.4)
- 5 Chaz: But it's not work yet. °So I didn't wa[nna<°=
|
((Chaz lightly rumples up his hair))
- 6 Nita: [No:.
- 7 Chaz: =H[hhhh
|
((Chaz scratches his nose, looking towards Nita off camera))
- 8 Nita: [Yea. (0.3) Exactly.
- 9 (0.7) ((Chaz shifts his gaze from Nita off camera to the large mirror, touching his hair again, but soon retracts his hand when Nita walks back to fix his hair, smiling))
- 10 Chaz: Let's pretend we don't have to go to work tomorrow morning.
|
((Nita fixes Chaz' haircut, looking at it and smiling))
- 11 (7.5) ((Nita continues to fix the styling of Chaz' cut))
- 12 Nita: °(This right here), I think it's a bit° (.) too heavy.
|
((Nita shifts her posture and gaze towards the counter))
- 13 (0.4)
- 14 Nita: It's not laying the way I want it to, [so.
|
((Nita faces back at Chaz with a comb and scissors))
- 15 Chaz: [Alright.

Nita initiates the service-assessment sequence by asking two questions in succession (line 2), and Chaz' answer to the first question is overlapped with Nita's second question. Here, instigated by Nita's questions, he also starts engaging in physical inspection by moving his head downward, and then he provides his response to Nita's second question (line 3). By this time, Nita already starts shifting her bodily posture for the next course of action, which is to walk off-camera to possibly wipe her hands with a towel, and perhaps get a hand-held mirror for an upcoming official physical inspection. Generally speaking, they will now proceed to a second, more official service-assessment sequence with an aid of a hand-held mirror. However, as Nita walks off, Chaz comments on the incongruity of the present style, and lightly rearranges the cut on his own (line 5).

Here, it is noticeable that Chaz works on minimizing the chance of disparaging Nita's expertise, which may arise from such a revision request. Instead of verbalizing his dissatisfaction with the current style, or making a request, he makes a statement about the weekend (the session was recorded on Sunday) that Nita can easily agree to: "it's not work yet"(for him). He also indifferently touches his hair (line 5), but does not quite fix it on his own (Figure 20). In fact, he retracts his hand as soon as Nita agrees with Chaz by saying "No" at full volume (line 6), making the haircut available for the stylist to fix it. At this moment, he also shifts his head toward Nita off camera and laughs, presenting his previous commentary as somewhat comical (line 7). Chaz then touches his hair again (line 9), but this does not even last a second, and he immediately takes his hand back when Nita walks back to him. Again, here he really does not perform "fixing," but his hand movements rather function as a gesture of a *novice*, marking it as a "try" to display his anticipation of the expert's work on the cut. Thus, by the verbal and embodied actions, Chaz not only works on minimizing the possible occurrence of an uncomfortable

moment, but also manages to exemplify Chaz' role as a novice (and therefore Nita's expertness) and invites Nita to join this decision-making process.



Figure 20: Chaz touches his hair

Correspondingly, Nita builds up her expert identity throughout the possibly reputation-threatening moments by treating Chaz' report as *non-news*, but something that is agreeable and that she perhaps already knew. Note how quickly she agrees with Chaz' comment (line 6) and upgrades her agreement through additional remarks (line 8). When she walks back to Chaz, she vigorously and repeatedly ruffles up his hair, during which *she* decides that the front of the cut is too heavy and needs an additional cut. In consequence, even though the issue was launched by Chaz, Nita managed to join the process of decision-making of styling the cut for non-work through her vocal and bodily actions. To be specific, Nita yielded to what Chaz wanted while maintaining her identity as an expert; she did not just listen to and align with Chaz, but dynamically engaged in expressing that she also *thought* that way. As a result of Chaz' carefully organized

actions and Nita's active involvement, the event of modifying the cut was made into a mutual decision between the customer and the stylist. Additionally, her expertise is also seen in the way she ends the sequence; she decides that the cut is not laying in the way that *she* wanted (line 14). Here, she demonstrates her professional knowledge and makes a professional decision of re-engaging in another cutting session.

Just as we see in the activity of turn-taking (in which, principally, one person speaks at a time), only one person generally touches the cut at a given time during the service-assessment sequence. Thus, the participants negotiate the accessibility to the new hairstyle: who gets to touch, and when. In the above situation, Chaz cautiously coordinated his hand movements so that the stylist had prior access to the cut. He only lightly touched his haircut when Nita was away, and promptly relinquished the access to Nita when she was ready. At the same time, he yielded the right of fixing the cut to Nita, although he could have easily done the restyling himself. From this example, we can see that the participants count on the access to the haircut as one way to embody their expert or novice status.

The next example, in contrast, shows a customer fixing the front of his cut while the stylist is still working on the back part of the cut. How does the stylist retain the role of professional yet pursue the satisfaction of the customer?

This segment was recorded in the same, hip salon in South Austin that Nita works for, but on a different weekend. Similar to the day that Chaz and Kim visited the salon, the lounge was occupied with waiting customers. The customer, Jack, walked in with his wife for their haircuts, and another stylist, Adel, served the wife first, and then Jack immediately afterwards. In this salon, regularly, the receptionist appoints customers with available stylists unless they specifically request a particular stylist, which happens on occasion. Likewise, Jack and his wife had visited the salon in the past, but were served

with different stylists, so it was their first time to work with Adel. Following the cutting and session, Adel spends some time to demonstrate to Jack how to style the new cut with hair wax, and now solicits Jack's feedback.

[27-A] Flip it up more ("Jack & Adel" 01:03-01:10)

- 1 ((Adel has been styling Jack's new haircut and explaining how to style it on his own))
- 2 Adel: Something kinda like so?
└──────────┘
((Adel is styling the side of the head, looking at Jack and his hair in the large mirror))
- 3 (0.5)
- 4 Jack: °Sure,° yeah I usually go flip it up a little bit more.
└────────────────────────────────┘
((Jack starts lightly fixing the front with both hands; Adel slightly moves her hands to the back of Jack's haircut and continues stroking his hair))
- 5 Adel: Flip up it a little bit [more?
└┘((Jack starts fixing more aggressively))
((Adel retracts her hands from Jake's hair))
- 6 Jack: [Yeah.

Having explained Jack how to style the cut, Adel asks for Jack's approval (line 2), and Jack provides a preferred response ("Sure, yeah" in line 4). Schegloff (2007) argues that second speakers often provide a preferred response as a default and then change it into a dispreferred answer (pp. 66-67). Similarly, Jack's "default" response is followed by a contradicting statement about Adel's styling work. Moreover, he starts fixing the front of his cut with his both hands while Adel is still stroking the back of his haircut (Figure 21).



Figure 21: Jack restyles the cut

Similar to what we saw in the previous example, Adel does not treat Jack's comment as new or unanticipated (e.g., she does not use a news-receipt remark, such as "oh"). Instead, she calmly repeats it in a question format (line 5), by which Jack's affirmative answer is made a relevant and preferred action, and Jack performs it via an overlapping response (line 6). Yet, what is different from the previous example is the degree of the customer's physical involvement in modifying the style. Recall that the customer, Chaz, made sure that the stylist had prior access to the haircut. Jack, however, continues to expansively fix his cut on his own, and in fact, Adel relinquishes her access to the cut by retracting her hands (line 5). The experience of fixing the style is now completely taken over by the customer, which blurs the boundaries of the participants' roles as stylist (expert) and customer (novice) and can threaten the stylist's status as a professional. Now, let us observe how Adel solves this issue through her bodily actions.

[27-B] Flip it up more ("Jack & Adel" 01:07-01:32)

5 Adel: Flip up it a little bit [more?
| L ((Jack starts fixing more aggressively))
((Adel retracts her hands
from Jake's hair))

6 Jack: [Yeah.

7 (1.5) ((Jack continues to fix the hair;
Adel slightly moves from left to right, repetitively nodding))

8 Jack: Like that?

9 (0.7) ((Adel continues to nod; Jack stops his hand movements))

10 Adel: Yeah, yeah, (>yeah<).
|
((Adel nods three times))
|
((Jack retracts his hands and puts them down))

11 (2.5) ((Adel lightly strokes the side of Jack's hair))

12 Adel: Cool, (.) I was pushing forward and you were pushing back.
| L ((Adel shifts gaze down,
((Adel lightly strokes taking out Jake's collar from under the cover))
the lower back of
Jack's haircut))

13 Jack: hh alhhrihhght hh
|
((Adel shrugs shoulder))

14 Adel: You know? Hh

15 (6.0) ((Adel continues to fixing Jake's collar;
Jack and Adel continues smiling))

16 Adel: O::ka[:y.
|
((Adel takes off the cover))

17 Jack: [A:lri::[ght.

18 Adel: [Darling.=

19 Jack: =Right. (.) Great. ((Jack stands up))

20 (1.2)

21 Adel: Swe[et.

22 Jack: [Thank you.

23 Adel: You're welcome.

As Jack works on fixing the hairstyle, Adel concentrates on watching his behavior from behind him, during which she continuously nods: approximately five times, at times nodding deeply. Yet, what is Adel nodding to, and responding to? There is no FPP that solicits Adel's nods, nor bodily actions from Jack that call for Adel's attention (no facial expression, nor gaze shift to Adel). By creating voluntarily actions, Adel successfully joins the process of fixing the style, and by reacting to Jack's bodily actions through head nods, Adel treats Jack's movements in fixing the style as actions that need her response. In turn, the revision of the style, once taken over by Jack, now turns into a *collaborative* event between them; Jack physically works on fixing, and Adel *supervises* the process, providing a series of head nods. Jack eventually aligns with, and verifies, this context when he seeks for Adel's approval as he is close to finishing the restyling (line 8).

In this manner, Adel uses alternative bodily actions in order to preserve her role as the expert, and her next actions in responding to Jack's question again confirm the position. In line 10, Adel shows her strong agreement with Jack by repeating "yeah" and also overtly nodding. Here, her response functions to align and agree with Jack, thereby pursuing Jack's satisfaction, but it also serves to *approve* Jack's work, which authenticates her role as a professional hairstylist. Accordingly, Jack keeps his hands frozen, and around his head even after he finishes styling, and puts them down, as seen in the middle of line 10, *only* when Adel provides the approval. Also, Adel brings her hands back to stroke the side and back of Jack's cut when Jack puts his hands down (line 11). Her hand movements here do not seem to contribute much to the appearance of Jack's haircut, but she still touches the haircut and concludes the event of fixing. These actions by Jack and Adel portray their appropriate roles in the given context; Adel is the expert

who carries the right to make a final decision of whether the modification has been successful. The sequence of fixing is followed by Adel's joke, which Jack aligns with laughter (lines 12-14), thus leading to a satisfactory and peaceful completion of the service-assessment sequence (lines 16-23).

In the two instances above, the stylist worked with a customer's already-made-requests and successfully maintained their professionalism despite the role-reversing moments. However, the action of requesting is dispreferred in the usual course of interaction. Accordingly, when someone needs to make a request, s/he may pre-expand the sequence by asking a question that projects an upcoming request. Then, "the preferred response to the pre-request is to pre-empt the need for a request altogether by offering that which is to be requested" (Schegloff, 2007, p. 90). In other words, simply responding to a pre-request with a go-ahead response may not be an appropriate action, but making an offer is. However, making an offer is not always an unproblematic action, especially if it is performed before the other person provides any sort of pre-request. The next case is an example of the stylist, Britney, and the customer, Kira, whom we met in Example 13 in Chapter 5. There, we examined the way they achieved satisfactory completion of the final service-assessment sequence. Here, the segment we are about to observe is their first, preliminary service-assessment sequence during which Kira's shoulders are still covered with a cape.

[28-A] The bangs ("Kira & Britney" 00:09-00:14)

- 1 ((Britney has finished styling Kira's hair))
- 2 Brit: (You might) wanna see.
- |
- ((Britney picks up a hand-held mirror and hands it to Kira))
- 3 (0.7) ((Kira makes a smile))

the customer to receive additional service. However, considering that the stylist has already spent time styling the customer's cut, declaring the unsuitability of the bangs may convey dissimilar aesthetic standpoints between them, and in the worst case, a stylist's bad sense and skills. Now, conversely, it is also possible that Britney's question was simply used to suggest to Kira how to inspect the haircut. Then, providing an affirmative response would hint at the unsatisfactory quality of Britney's service, therefore labeled as a dispreferred action. In summary, the selection of the next course of action is a difficult one to make for Kira, since more than one preference structure is involved in Britney's question: 1) providing a go-ahead response to the pre-offer (a preferred action in general); and 2) declining the pre-offer (showing satisfaction with the way the bangs currently are). Which preference structure dominates here and shapes the construction of the SPP? Here, we see how Kira then carefully organizes her next action by providing an ambiguous, mitigated response with a delay.

[28-B] The bangs ("Kira & Britney" 00:14-00:26)

9 (0.5) ((Kira moves her hand toward her bangs))

10 Kira: U:::m (.) a little bit.
 └──────────┘ └──────────┘
 ((Kira moves her hand ((Kira palms her bangs))
 around her bangs))

11 (0.7) ((Brit looks into the hand-held mirror that Kira's holding))

12 Brit: (A[bove's thick?)
 |
 ((Brit shifts her gaze to one side and looks for something))

13 Kira: [Cuz (it's like)
 └──────────┘
 ((Kira pats the top of her bangs))

14 (0.8) ((Kira shakes the head to the side))

the bangs), and that is when Kira provides an affirmative answer in a preferred-action turn shape: clear-cut and emphasized (line 15). Receiving the customer's evident go-ahead response, Britney makes an offer (line 17), and Kira accepts it (line 18).

Yet, Kira does not merely produce the preferred action of accepting the offer. Look how she overtly shakes her head before making the utterance (line 14). In the previous examples, we saw that the stylists organized their actions so that the event of fixing the cut – initially set out by the customer – becomes a result of their *mutual* decision. In this case, it is the stylist who took the initiative for the event, and now the customer organizes her actions for a mutual decision. As soon as Kira sees Britney looking for something (i.e., a comb) in line 12, Kira conducts an additional physical inspection by shaking her head and looking at the bangs from a different, new angle (Figure 22). Only *after that*, does she produce her affirmative response. By performing physical inspection prior to her utterance, Kira manages to shape the response as *her own* thought that is *based on* the new visual information gathered. In other words, she prevented herself from being presented as a customer that plainly followed the stylist's judgment. In the end, Kira not only successfully balanced the multiple preference structures and upheld Britney's expertness, but also her status as a professional customer (not just aligning with the stylist but providing her own thoughts and insight), during the problematic moment of fixing the hairstyle.



Figure 22: Kira looks at the bangs from a different angle

Fixing the cut during the service-assessment sequence is a sensitive matter, and the participants closely monitor each other's actions to negotiate and prepare for it. This section showed that the participants coordinate their verbal and embodied actions so that no matter who initiated the fix, modification of the cut eventually becomes a collaborative event. However, participants do not always orient to the mutuality of a decision. We will now turn to a discussion of deviant cases.

7.2 FIXING THE HAIRCUT AS A PARTICIPANT'S SOLO DECISION

To this point, we have seen that the stylist and customer worked on formulating the event of fixing a cut as a *mutual* decision between them, and harmonized their expert/novice responsibilities with a pursuit of a client's satisfaction. Nevertheless, there are cases in which they "fail" to collaborate with each other in building a mutual decision. This section examines two cases in which one of the participants lets several opportunities for joining the process of decision-making pass: 1) a customer does not

adjust her actions to accommodate the stylist's communicative work on making a mutual decision; and 2) a stylist distances herself from a customer's decision. Would they not be considered as professionalized communicators, or are their expectations in the roles of stylist and customer different?

Our first case is an example of a previously observed customer, Chie, and her stylist, Tia. When Chie prolonged her physical inspection in Chapter 5, we saw how Tia strategically (yet smoothly) initiated a sequence closure by using a base FPP and embodied actions by shifting her gaze and posture from the mirror to Chie (see Example 8). There, I mentioned that this was one of Chie's first haircutting experiences in the U.S., which might have contributed to Chie's lack of knowledge in an effective organization of the multiple strands seen in the service-assessment sequence. In the following segment as well, we see traces of Chie's unfamiliarity with the approach of physical inspection. This is their first, preliminary service-assessment sequence, during which Chie is still wearing the barber's cape over her shoulders.

[29-A] More thinning out ("Chie & Tia" 00:04-00:19)

```
1      ((Tia finishes styling and looks up at Chie in the large mirror))
2      Tia:  Let me know if you need me to thin out your hair=
3      Tia:  =a little bit more.
           |
           ((Tia starts walking towards the counter))
4      (0.5) ((Tia walks off towards counter;
              Chie stays still, looking at the large mirror))
5      Tia:  You wanna feel through it, so I can- (.) s- [(.) you can=
           |
           ((Tia waves both her hands
              along the sides of her face))
           |
           ((Chie directly looks at Tia and repetitively nods))
```


6 Chie: [Okay.]
 ((Chie continues to nod and takes her left hand from underneath the cape))

7 Tia: =tell me if you wannna thin it out.
 ((Tia looks for something on the counter; Chie nods and pulls down her chin to look at the top of her cut))

8 (1.5) ((Chie puts her left hand on her bangs but hesitantly; Tia directly looks at Chie and raises her hand))

9 Tia: Feel, (.) feel through the: (0.6) layers and everything, (.)=
 ((Tia mimics the motion of “feeling through” by waving her hands along the sides of her face, and Chie produces the similar motions on her haircut))

10 Tia: =n’ tell me if you wanna more thinned out.
 ((Tia shifts her posture and gaze back to the counter; Chie continues to feel through her hair))

11 (0.9) ((Chie continues to feel through her hair))

12 Chie: Yea!
 ((Tia looks at Chie with scissors and a comb in her hands, and Chie nods looking at Tia))

13 Tia: More thinned out? (0.5) A little bit more?
 ((Tia leans in toward Chie and nods))
 ((Chie looks back at the large mirror and continues to feel through her hair with her both hands))

As Tia finishes styling the new haircut, she asks Chie to examine the cut (lines 2-3), which is not seemingly understood by Chie who provides no reaction (line 4). Tia then demonstrates the next expected action from Chie, using talk and bodily actions (line 5). This time, Chie shows her understanding by repetitive head nods overlapped with Tia’s utterance and also by saying “okay” (line 6). Yet it turns out that Tia’s actions were not clear enough for Chie to produce the actual motions at this time as well. Chie shows her understanding of the next relevant action by moving her chin and hands, but the lack of knowledge in *how* to conduct the action causes her to move her body awkwardly and

roughly (lines 7-8). Seeing Chie's stuttered bodily motions, Tia repeats the instruction with more explicit embodied actions for "feeling through" the hair (lines 9-10). Chie now immediately reproduces the same hand movements on her hair, and Tia then leaves Chie alone to examine her cut; Tia shifts her posture and gaze towards the counter to find a comb and a pair of scissors. When Tia looks back at Chie, Chie provides an affirmative answer (line 12). Here, it is not clear who or what Chie said "yes" to. From the way it is produced in a preferred-action turn shape (clear-cut and emphasized), her utterance was probably used to perform the action of showing her satisfaction. But because Tia's earlier utterances referred to the possible need for more cutting, Chie's verbal action could also be interpreted as a go-ahead response to Tia's pre-offer of additional labor. Tia chooses to take Chie's response as the latter, and proceeds to offer additional labor to thinning out Chie's hair (line 13). Only then, it becomes clear – as seen in the next segment – that Chie's affirmative response in line 12 was indeed *not* a go-ahead response to Tia's pre-offer.

As seen in the earlier example with Britney and Kira (Example 28), the stylist's offer during the service-assessment sequence can create a delicate moment in interaction; a generally preferred action of accepting may conflict with the customer's will to show his/her satisfaction with the service that has been provided. In their example, Kira dealt with this problematic situation by carefully negotiating the meanings of the stylist's utterance, and what is indeed *the* relevant action to take. For example, to answer Britney's question, Kira first provided an ambiguous, mitigated response with a delay. Similarly, Chie delays her response to Tia's question by not immediately providing a clear answer.


```

27   Tia:  =volumeless, because you're hhh [(.) hh, (.) a superstar.
                                             |
                                             ((Tia retracts her hand, and
Chie also puts her right hand down))

28   Chie:                                     [hhh

29   Chie: hh hh.

30   Tia:  Let me see. (.) I'm just gonna thin out just like, right=
           └──────────┘      |
           ((Chie raises her left hand and touches the left side of the cut, but soon retracts it and freezes in the air for a second))
           ((Tia takes some hair from the top; Chie puts down her hand))

31   Tia:  =here. ((Tia starts thinning out the top of Chie's haircut))

```

Chie delays her response to Tia's question (line 14), and does not provide the adequate SPP (line 15). Tia treats it as a result of Chie's improper physical inspection, and repeats the explanation and performs the bodily gesture directly on Chie's haircut (lined 16-17). Chie then finally puts together the correct actions of "feeling through" the hair (line 18), which is acknowledged by Tia (line 19). Note that at this point, Tia is already prepared for additional labor; not only is the hairdressing cape still draped over on Chie, but Tia is also holding a pair of scissors and a comb in her hands (Figure 23).



Figure 23: Tia is holding a pair of scissors and a comb

In Example 28, as soon as Kira made sure of Britney's determination to fix the bangs, Kira coordinated her actions not only to align with, but also to actively contribute to, the decision of fixing the bangs. In the current example, Tia also hints at "more thinning" as the next event through her embodied actions and the repetitive use of "thin out." Unlike Kira, however, Chie does not align with Tia, but provides a response that blocks Tia's offer (line 22). Still, her response is somewhat uncertainly framed, as seen in her rising tone at the end of the sentence. Thus, Chie may be using this utterance as a tryout, being still unclear of the appropriate action to be taken. In any case, Chie's assessment is followed by no reaction from Tia (line 23), which indicates Chie's response as irrelevant. To be precise, this silence provides Chie with an opportunity to modify her actions, perhaps providing a go-ahead response and/or leading into a collaborative decision of fixing the haircut. But that is not what she does; she renounces the right to decide on the additional labor by asking for Tia's opinion (line 24). Now that the duty of

deciding is imposed on Tia alone, she walks behind Chie to inspect Chie's hair on her own (line 25), and decided to thin out a portion (the top) of her haircut (line 30).

As we reflect the way the sequence was launched by Tia, it seems that Tia was determined to thin out the cut from the beginning of the sequence. For instance, instead of asking Chie if she liked the cut, Tia specifically asked whether more thinning-out was needed. Additionally, as she asked this question, Tia already began walking off to the counter to retrieve a pair of scissors and a comb. Why, then, didn't Tia just simply continue the cutting session on her own? She could have thinned out Chie's hair to what she, as a professional, would have deemed satisfactory if she was going to do so anyway and after that she could have turned to Chie for her service-assessment. Nevertheless, it appears that Tia has disrupted the haircutting activity for this seemingly unnecessarily service-assessment sequence. One possible explanation for Tia's actions is that this sequence was designed for reaching a *collaborative* decision on additional labor between the customer and the stylist, rather than for obtaining the customer's service-assessment. By building a mutual decision prior to the final, official service-assessment sequence, the stylist can prepare for, and increase the chance of, a successful and smooth communication at the time of the final service-assessment sequence. Thus, Tia launched the sequence in a hunt for Chie's alliance to come to an agreement on a side project of thinning out the cut. Yet, despite Tia's efforts in seeking out Chie's course of action, Chie failed to act upon Tia's objective of co-constructing a mutual decision, and the decision ended up being made by Tia alone. However, this instance still exemplifies the stylist's strong attempt for a shared decision-making process. Accordingly, if the cases analyzed throughout this chapter show the stylist's active involvement in the event of fixing, then what kind of a stylist would deviate from this course of action?

Our last example demonstrates a case in which the stylist, Allison, isolates herself from a customer's request for fixing the cut. The unisex chain salon in which the stylist works operates on a first-come-first-served basis, and because of its location – within walking distance from a large university –, the majority of its clients are students. The client, Greg, walked in for his haircut on a weekday evening, and about five other customers had been waiting in a lounge at that time. He waited for approximately ten minutes before Allison called his name, and because more clients walked in during Greg's session, there was always a considerable number of people (and noise) from the lounge and other stylists with their clients. The excerpt below begins immediately after the cutting session. Having cut Greg's hair, Allison provides a comb to Greg, which is unusual considering that stylists usually provide a hand-held mirror to their customers at the beginning of the service-assessment sequence. Yet, seemingly knowledgeable about how to get on with the comb, Greg smoothly received it and started inspecting the haircut, and styling the cut in his own fashion.

[30-A] More on the sides ("Greg & Allison" 00:03-00:14)

- 1 ((Alli takes out a comb from a drawer and gives it to Greg))
- 2 (8.0) ((Greg combs and feels through his hair, facing a large mirror
in front of him; Alli walks off to get a hand-held mirror))
- 3 (3.5) ((Alli walks back and stands next to the large mirror, facing
Greg, with the hand-held mirror in her hand; Greg continues to
examine the cut))
- 4 ((Alli looks somewhere else, and then looks down))

While Greg inspects his new cut by combing and looking at it, Allison walks away to find a hand-held mirror (line 2). When she comes back to Greg, she does not

15 (10.0) ((Greg examines the back of his cut by looking into the portable
mirror, moving it from side to side; Alli stands by him but
looks away towards her right, and then towards the lounge))

16 Greg: ((repetitively nods)) °That's good.°
((Greg looks directly at Alli,
holding out the hand-held mirror;
Alli continues to look toward the lounge))

17 Alli: Okay, it's alright, so some more on the sides.
((Alli receives the mirror and turns the chair back forwards
while continually looking away towards the lounge))

18 Greg: I guess, yeah, I mean=
((Greg momentarily feels through his hair))

19 Alli: =That's okay, no↑ pro↓[ble↑m.
((Alli walks off camera to put away the portable mirror))

20 Greg: [Maybe. (.) Hhaahh[hhh.
((Greg fixes the sides of his hair))

21 Alli: [Okay.

22 ((Alli walks back to Greg and receives the comb back from Greg,
then wets the sides of Greg's hair with a spray bottle
for another cutting session))

Here, Allison again disengages from the process of physical inspection. She looks in various directions while Greg examines the back of his haircut with the hand-held mirror (line 15). In fact, she continues to look towards the lounge throughout the rest of the sequence, even when Greg provides a service-assessment and shifts his gaze from the mirror to directly look at her (line 16). Because the salon does not have a receptionist, the stylists often have to pay attention to customers walking in and out, which may have caused Allison's inattentive behavior toward Greg. Other, possibly more interesting conversations were also occurring at this time, and it is possible that she was listening to her colleagues with other clients. Yet, she could have done so in a less obvious way. Instead, she chose to behave in a way that is likely interpreted as if she was prioritizing

other customers and attended to other matters rather than the customer she is currently serving. Such behavior from the stylist can violate the need for pampering a customer and risks the customer's feeling of dissatisfaction. Then, what drove Allison to present herself in such a way?

Allison's choice of actions may stand for a different "professional knowledge" employed at some salons. According to Kang (2003), diverse meanings of "emotional labour" exist among various beauty service workplaces. She compares three nail salons in New York City, that are racially and socioeconomically assorted: 1) "Uptown Nails" for white, middle- and upper-class clients; 2) "Downtown Nails" for Black, working- and lower-middle-class clients; and 3) "Crosstown Nails" for racially mixed lower-middle and middle-class clients. Among them, she found that Crosstown Nails required less emotional attention from service-providers, which was compensated by cheap and efficient work. She describes their task as: "routinized body labor involving efficient, competent physical labor and courteous but minimal emotional labor" (p. 827). Apparently, similar professional knowledge dominates the hair salon that Allison works for. That is, they minimize pampering and emotional work, which often takes more time in terms of talk and physical labor, thus hindering their selling point: cheap and speedy service. Recall, for example, how Allison treated Greg's suggestion for fixing. If she treated it as an agreeable/disagreeable statement, like any other stylists would, she would have had to secure some time for responding, such as shaping her turn appropriately for agreeing/disagreeing, and/or elaborating on her response. In order to leave out such "extra" work, she attended to Greg's verbal actions as a delivery of information, for which acknowledging is an appropriate response and can be done via an economical, uncomplicated verbal practice (i.e. "okay"). In this way, Allison performed – efficient and quick – professional work.

The professional standard held by Allison also explains her decreased involvement in the customer's physical inspection process. She gave a comb to Greg at the beginning of the sequence, so that he could style the cut *on his own*, and so that they could both skip the negotiation process of how to style his cut altogether. When Allison stood near Greg, it was not to join the inspection, but for other incentives, such as being ready to hand a portable mirror to Greg and turning the chair around. In fact, she constantly looked away from Greg while standing by next to him. At a glance, it may appear as if she was distracted by external factors (such as the conversation from other clients regarding massive blood loss), and/or just have been uncaring about her current customer's reactions to the service. This case may have been quite the opposite however, as she may have *actively* worked on preventing herself from looking at Greg and joining his physical inspection process, and the setting (e.g., customers walking in, other people talking) might have been used as a resource for her to do so.

The event of fixing as Greg's *solo* decision is again emphasized by Allison's "indifferent" behavior at the time of sequence closure. While Greg's verbal action provides Allison with another opportunity to make the decision a collaborative one, she once again passes the opportunity by simply permitting Greg's request, instead of supporting and agreeing with Greg's decision (line 19). However, those "uncaring" actions allow the participants to keep advancing the activity, which is the primary objective in this type of "quick and cheap" or "effective and 'indifferent'" salon. The stylists may have to compromise emotional work for achieving this motto, but they may also organize their verbal and embodied actions for detaching themselves to allow for the client's private, physical inspection process. Likewise, being inactive with making a mutual decision on fixing the cut may be the result of their "professionalized" communication skills accustomed for this type of workplace.

At the beginning of this chapter, I introduced these deviant cases as those wherein a participant “fails to” collaborate with others in making the decision mutual. While both Chie and Allison passed the chance to align with their interactants, a microanalysis of these cases also reveals diversity in the professionalization of communication at beauty salons. I will end the chapter with a discussion of a range of professionalized communication skills seen in the negotiation of revising a haircut.

7.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter looked at the participants’ professionalized communication skills at one of the most challenging events during the service-assessment sequence: revision (or proposal for revision) of a cut. The first set of cases showed the participants’ work on formulating the event of fixing a cut as a mutual decision between them. In doing so, they coordinated their verbal and embodied actions for achieving what Hochschild (1983) calls “deep acting” (as opposed to “surface acting”), i.e., not only aligning and/or sympathizing with another, but feeling the same, specific emotions that are relative to the other. By showing that they too *thought* that way, the participants in these examples did not only perform emotional labor, but also saved and preserved their own professional identities. For instance, stylists, Nita (Example 26) and Adel (Example 27), successfully executed their roles as a beauty expert, while Kira in Example 28 played a role of a professional customer who presented her own opinion. In spite of the sensitivity surrounding the nature of revisions, these participants worked on harmonizing an expert’s responsibility with the client’s right to have an opinion on the need for fixing. Accordingly, their professionalized communication skills were exemplified in that neither relationship – that of expert and novice, and that of service-provider and client – exceeded another, but nicely merged through the process of a haircut revision.

On the other hand, we also saw opposite cases in the second section, where a set of roles (e.g., expert and novice) overrode the other (e.g., service-provider and client). With Chie in Example 29, she depended on her stylist, Tia's (expert) opinion, and the sequence concluded with Tia's own decision for additional work of thinning out the hair. Alternatively, in Example 30, the stylist, Allison, neglected several opportunities to work with Greg on renovating his revision request into a mutual decision. That is, she only held on to her role as a mere service-provider, but not a hair expert. In the examples with Chie and Allison, we get a glimpse into their alternative, *professional* knowledge. In Example 29, because Chie had been almost certainly satisfied with the way the cut was by then, as seen in her original verbal response ("Yea!"), Chie could have provided her negative response when Tia again asked about the additional cutting work on her hair. Instead, Chie "gave up" her right of deciding for the next event (i.e., whether the additional labor of thinning out the hair was necessary or not) to the stylist, Tia, and her actions resulted in isolating Tia as the decision-maker. This behavior from Chie likely had roots in her modesty and desire to present herself as a novice, thus to show her high regard for Tia's expertise as a hairstylist. For Chie, this might be the characteristic of an appropriate and "professional" customer. Allison in Example 30 also exercised her professional knowledge by tailoring her communicative work – which appeared uncaring – in order to accommodate the distinctiveness of the service provided at the salon in which she works. Her case also implies that emotional labor, which has been emphasized among the study of beauty-related workplaces, does not always necessarily enhance the professional work. Rather, some stylists may be required to turn off the emotional labor.

Thus, Chie's and Allison's seemingly "incompetent" actions in fact come from an exercise of their own view of (and training in) professionalism. Still, the problem with these deviant cases is that their professional knowledge might not have met with the

expectation/knowledge held by their interactants. Recall that in Example 29, Tia provided Chie with several opportunities to collaborate with Tia for making a shared decision. Likewise, Greg in Example 30 organized his actions so that Allison could easily agree with Greg's comments and/or even supersede the situation by acting as an expert. Despite their efforts, Chie and Allison remained faithful to their own expectations of "professionalism," which ultimately resulted in the independent decision from Tia and Greg. Indeed, the disparity in the definition of professionalism between stylists and customers may be a reason behind the low occurrence (and fear) of revision requests. Among the corpus of data collected in U.S. and Japan, there were not many cases in which customers request fixing of their haircuts. Despite the low number of such cases, I often hear complaints on new haircuts. Such complaints were at times heard during the data collection as well. In one of the videotaped sessions, the participants successfully finished the haircutting activity with a smoothly progressing service-assessment sequence with no revision requests. As soon as the customer left the salon, however, she spoke of her profound disappointment with the new haircut to the videographer. Thus, it is doubtful that the low number of cases of clients making revision or modification requests can always be attributed to the client's genuine satisfaction with the quality of the service.

On top of the general conversation rule – requesting is dispreferred –, the context of beauty salon interactions makes the action of revision request difficult for customers to perform; a customer's request may imply a stylist's unsatisfactory service and/or skills, which may threaten a stylist's professional identity. Also, it could potentially conflict with the stylist's schedule, especially when s/he has a subsequent appointment and/or there are other clients already waiting their turn. Nevertheless, the service-assessment sequence is where customers are allowed to provide their own, straightforward opinion

on the cut/styling and ask for additional labor, if necessary. Similarly, the stylist can elevate the customer's degree of satisfaction within the service-assessment sequence by fixing the cut. The revision of a cut or styling can only improve the quality of the service at a beauty salon, but a client's courage to ask for a revision, a stylist's accessibility to criticism and additional work, and/or *just* professionalized communication skills are not enough for its successful negotiation. What is essential is their shared understanding of, and diagnostic skills to look for, each other's view of what constitutes professional communication and fluidity in their actions accordingly, occasionally notwithstanding the existing professional knowledge.

Chapter 8. The Beauty of Consensus

A wide assortment of communicative phenomena happen in beauty salons, and researchers have examined a number of matters that are relevant to beauty salon interactions, such as identity, multiple involvement, expert talk, and pampering. While these studies have discovered a set of skills demanded from beauty professionals, very few studies have observed how beauty professionals coordinate and integrate the communicative resources at their disposal: multimodal micropractices and their deployment in building work-related contexts. Furthermore, none of these studies have paid attention to the service-assessment sequence, which is one of the few places that the customers are invited to officially provide their opinions on the quality of a service.

Thus, I have approached the study of professionalization through a microanalysis of the service-assessment sequence within beauty salon interactions. The service-assessment sequence is so common in the activity of haircutting that it has been found in all videotaped sessions collected for the present study. From the study of these sessions, we have seen that the fundamental purpose of this sequence is for customers to make assessments on the quality of the service. New haircuts may not necessarily be perfect, nor should they always be exactly what the customer had envisioned. At times, aesthetic views between a stylist and a customer may differ greatly. Thus, the service-assessment sequence provides an opportunity for the participants to discuss and negotiate the quality of the service, which may also involve disagreement and disalignment with each other. However, none of the service-assessment sequences in the present study ended in disagreement (including sessions not directly documented in this dissertation). So, how did all participants in both the U.S. and Japan achieve the production of consensus?

8.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The microanalytic observations of this particular action sequence have revealed a number of tactics that participants use for the smooth conduct of the service-assessment sequence, as well as tasks that come with negotiating and coming to a consensus. In Chapter 4, we discovered the participants' systematic coordination of talk and action through multiple responses, i.e., multiple second pair parts (SPPs). In general, the service-assessment sequence begins with a stylist's invitation for an assessment, such as "do you like it?" and/or "it looks like this." In responding to a stylist's question and/or assessment, the customer provides two (or sometimes more) SPPs (e.g., saying "yes" twice). By providing the first, immediate SPP, customers avoid a delayed response. Otherwise, hesitation on their part, through accounted for by the physical activity (inspection), might be taken as a harbinger of disapproval, or something short of satisfaction: "I am not sure I like it."

During and upon their immediate response, customers would coordinate their bodily actions to carry out their *ongoing* physical inspection (e.g., fixing their gaze toward the hand-held mirror and touching their hair). Then, as they conclude the physical evaluation of the service, they provide the second SPP. Here, the customers provide a service-assessment now validated by the physical inspection, an informed assessment, in other words. This process is carefully attended to by the stylists, who withhold talk until after the customer provides their second/final SPP. On the other hand, when the performance inspection is irrelevant, the stylist would disregard a customer's *second* SPP. Alternatively, the stylist pursues a *second* SPP when a customer initiates a sequence closure without providing the *second* SPP. In this way, the participants effectively organize the service-assessment sequence by employing (or sometimes dismissing)

multiple SPPs. Consequently, talk and physical inspection were regularly completed in unison.

Chapter 5 also revealed the strategic coordination of talk and physical inspection, but the focus there was placed exclusively on the negotiation of closure. I looked at various combinations of verbal and embodied actions used by the stylists to terminate the customer's prolonged physical inspection. For example, the stylists would launch a base sequence (e.g., by saying "do you like it?" or "Is it okay?"), and at the same time shift their gaze to the customer, indicating an upcoming sequence closure. If a stylist already used the question in an earlier stage of the physical inspection, she would use it with a different addressee, such as a customer's friend, to acquire additional approval and move the sequence forward to closure. Other times, stylists use alternative verbal actions and shift their gaze and posture towards their customers, who in turn would lower the hand-held mirror and look back at the stylist. In this way, they transform a sensitive and problematic moment of prompting the termination of physical inspection into a moment of successful completion of service delivery.

Conversely, Chapter 5 also presented some stylists who post-expanded the service-assessment sequence even after their customers completed their inspection and talk in unison. In other words, microanalysis revealed that some stylists work on obtaining additional feedback on certain aspects of the service quality. For example, we saw that a stylist asked an additional question on a specific feature of a new haircut, which has been also the purpose of the customer's visit to a salon. However, the analyses in that chapter also revealed that stylists decide when to close the sequence under the present conditions of the setting (e.g., customers are waiting in the lobby) as well as the information gathered earlier (e.g., the clients had already given positive feedback during

the cut). While their decisions are often appropriate, such decisions may only end up catering to the service-provider's own satisfaction, but not to their customers'.

Actions of head nodding played a significant part in the production of consensus in Japan. In Chapter 6, we found that the participants use head nods midway through the physical inspection as well as at the sequence completion point. In addition, participants employ magnitudes of different head nods: small head nods to perform alignment work, and deep head nods to advance the inspection. At the end of the sequence, stylists and customers collaborate in producing a set of synchronized head nods. Ultimately, the two examples shown at the end of the chapter demonstrated that customers can advance the sequence without verbal actions, simply by head nodding. These analyses correspond to a concept underlying professional communication in Japan, that is, achieving consensus through the display of matched feelings.

Lastly, in Chapter 7, we examined one of the most difficult and sensitive moments of the service-assessment sequence: revision requests. Among the examples shown, sometimes stylists would offer revisions, and at other times, the revision would be requested by the customer. In both cases, the production of consensus requires acceptance of the request/offer. However, as discussed in Chapter 2, beauty professionals are *experts* who possess their own professional standards. While their task as a service-provider involves pampering customers through alignment work, they should not always *easily* agree with their customers. Likewise, customers are also expected to have opinions about their personal appearance; after all, *they* are the patrons, and the haircut belongs to them. In other words, clients would not want to *thoughtlessly* accept their stylist's offer for adjusting their haircut. In order to survive this problematic moment and come to consensus, the participants typically transform revision requests into *mutual* decisions, and they do so through unique combinations of verbal and embodied actions. They also

harmonize sometimes-conflicting multiple relationships such as expert/novice and service-provider/patron. However, this does not mean that people are unprofessional when they fail to come to a mutual decision. In two examples shown in that chapter, we first saw a customer who voluntarily left the decision-making up to the stylist alone and embodied her novice identity. In another example, the stylist kept the decision-making up to the customer for speedy service. These deviant cases revealed the different types of professional knowledge possessed by each participant and type of salons.

8.2 SEQUENCE ORGANIZATION FOR BEAUTY SALON INTERACTIONS

The findings outlined above have led me to capture several important aspects of professionalization in beauty salons, and perhaps, other comparable service professions. First and foremost, the professionals' ability to coordinate talk and action is a special trait. The analysis has shown the participants' careful work in harmonizing talk and physical activity during the service-assessment sequence. For example, the participants often made room for the physical inspection by modifying the basic form of a verbal sequence, such as through the use of multiple responses to a stylist's question. The conditional response was delayed until the inspection was complete. Likewise, professionalism was also seen in the stylist's ability to constantly monitor the harmonized development of talk and action. When a customer would fail to effectively coordinate talk and inspection work, the stylist would remedy the situation by expanding the service-assessment sequence. Alternatively, when the customers lingered on in their inspection despite the already-expressed consensus, the stylists expanded the sequence in ways that effectively terminate the physical activity.

Thus, the ability to coordinate talk and action is a significant element of professionalization, especially under the present circumstance where the service-

assessment sequence is to be accomplished upon completion of talk *and* physical inspection. After seeing such work on the part of the participants, we recognize just how flexible a service-assessment sequence can be. This flexible nature of sequence organization has been demonstrated by many conversation analysts, and Schegloff (2007) recently summarized it by discussing various cases of sequence expansion. Still, it is worth revisiting this matter in reference to the specific context of beauty salon interactions.

The service-assessment sequence is organized to accommodate not only the integration of talk and physical inspection, but also the varied circumstances of beauty salons. For example, Japanese sequences were rarely *post*-expanded. In Japanese salons, the majority of customers do not have physical control of the portable mirror. Instead, the stylist holds the mirror for the customer, commonly showing both sides of the back of a customer's haircut with a foldable mirror, and puts away the mirror when the talk is completed. That is to say, the progression of talk and action is largely controlled by the stylist, with which physical inspection is not usually available beyond the completion of talk. Accordingly, the stylists in Japan rarely post-expand the sequence. At times, the clients in Japan produced additional utterances, saying such things as "I feel refreshed," but these comments were rather characterized and treated as "post-completion musings," which "do *not* launch a new sequence or new 'business' embodied in some other type of organizational unit" (Schegloff, 2007, p. 143). In addition, they were often made along with bodily orientations that signaled topic closure (e.g., gaze withdrawal and/or decreased volume of speech) (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1987), and were only briefly answered by the stylist with laughter, a quick acknowledgement, or a repetition of the comments.

Therefore, in general, post-expansion is *not supposed to* take place in Japanese service-assessment sequences, and this may also explain why we did not find any revision requests (which often emerge during post-expansion). In Japanese service industries, service-providers are generally to reduce the “burden” on the client’s part by minimizing their physical labor. In beauty salons, the stylists eliminate “unnecessary” work from the clients by holding the mirrors for them. Under these circumstances, the sequence would not be lengthened, and the additional opportunity for the participants to negotiate consensus is omitted altogether. This may possibly sabotage a “fair” conduct of service evaluation.

In contrast, stylists in the U.S. salons normally provide customers with a hand-held mirror. This situation allows the customers to more or less control the duration of inspection, often requiring the stylist’s talk to get the mirror back from them. As a result, the probability of post-expansion is increased, but the shape of post-expansions may differ to accommodate different types of services within the U.S. In Chapter 5, we saw how, in order to accommodate “quick and affordable” service, the stylist prevented assessment sequences to be expanded beyond the customer’s response; the stylist took back the mirror, eliminating the opportunity for further service inspection. Through *minimized* post-expansion, the stylist effectively acquired the customer’s assessment on the specific work *and* completed the service within the expected time frame. Similarly, the post-expansion may be strategically designed to embody the kind of service as “a long project.” In another example of Chapter 5, we saw how the stylist post-expanded the almost-closed sequence to bring the client’s attention to the layers that have come together as a result of continuous service sessions. This session then closed with their agreement on how the client’s hairstyle has become better. Such conversation highlights

the *ongoing* relationship between the stylist and the client, which may not be easily found at value-oriented salons where customers are randomly assigned to any available stylist.

In this fashion, the service-assessment sequence is organized so that talk and action are eventually completed in unison. Despite the fundamental regularities, the service-assessment sequence is also frequently adapted to the specific circumstances of each beauty salon that may vary across different kinds of services and cultures.

8.3 PRODUCTION OF PROFESSIONAL ASSESSMENTS AND AGREEMENTS

Another element of professionalization in beauty salon interactions has been found in the participants' *professional* assessments and agreements. A number of service-assessments witnessed in the present study were not *just* given, but the act of assessing was frequently "dramatized" (Goffman, 1959)¹⁶.

For instance, many customers provided multiple responses to the stylist's questions that solicit customer assessments. The stylists' questions were about the new haircut, therefore, it was *justifiable* for customers to withhold their responses/assessments until the end of their haircut inspection. Nonetheless, the customers still provided their immediate verbal reactions to the stylist's question in avoiding the projection of dispreferred response. Heritage (1984) argues that "the preference organization of the design of actions is strongly institutionalized" (p. 267), and that the "characteristic features of preference organization exhibit a systematic 'bias' in favour of conflict avoidance, and their institutionalization collectivizes that bias as a feature of social structure" (p. 280). Likewise, the customers' immediate response to the stylist's question demonstrates their bias toward affiliative actions, which have taken priority over the

¹⁶ Goffman (1959) defines "dramatization" as: "[w]hile in the presence of others, the individual typically infuses his activity with signs which dramatically highlight and portray confirmatory facts that might otherwise remain unapparent or obscure" (p. 30).

contextual legitimacy of withholding service-assessments. Yet, through their *second* response, the customers' assessment was made *valid*: it did not come out of their motivation for aligning/agreeing only, but it has been produced based on their sufficient physical inspection and thus their *autonomous* judgment. These customers successfully oriented to the general preference for agreement/alignment *and* also produced professional assessments.

Such work on harmonizing the nature of human communication (i.e., avoid conflict but prefer agreement/alignment) and the professional tasks was also seen when the participants negotiated the revisions of the cut. When a revision of the cut is requested by the customer (or offered by the stylist), the next relevant action is the other's acceptance/rejection and/or agreement/disagreement with the request. Needless to say, rejection and/or disagreement threaten not only the chance of coming to consensus, but also their professional identities as a beauty expert and a patron. Hence, the participants in my examples agreed with and accepted each other's opinion, but remarkably, both stylists and customers often avoided presenting their agreement as *mere* aligning work. Instead, they conveyed *authentically* identical thoughts on the matter of revision through a systematic coordination of verbal and embodied actions. In doing so, stylists and customers achieved their communicative work for agreement/alignment while performing the professional assessment and negotiation.

Alternatively, agreement may mean passing up on an opportunity to make an assessment. We saw, in Example 29, how a Japanese customer expected her American stylist to make a judgment call on whether or not revisions were necessary. This may have come out of her motivation for "negative idealization" (Goffman, 1959, p. 40), i.e., "under-playing" as a novice, which is commonly viewed positively in Japanese society. Thus, it may well be the case that the customer asked for the stylist's opinion *in pursuit of*

professional agreement. Regardless, this behavior did not meet with the stylist's expectations of a professional agreement (i.e., the one jointly made between both parties), creating an uncomfortable pause. In Example 30, we saw how the stylist in a value-oriented salon neglected many opportunities provided by the customer for making collaborative assessments regarding the matter of revisions. In fact, the stylist treated the customer's request as a delivery of information and left the decision to the customer alone. In spite of her "uncaring" behavior, the stylist provided a speedy and economical service. Nothing personal, it was just business.

Thus, the participants constantly work on dramatizing their assessments and agreement to cater to the different circumstances of beauty salons, at times including different types of services. They do not *just* come to consensus, but they professionally go on the road to consensus.

8.4 STUDYING MULTIMODAL INTERACTION

Now that we have witnessed a particular type of professional work, we see also that multimodal analysis is an integral part of understanding what it means to be a professional hairstylist and a professional customer. This study has brought the implications for broader discourses around the challenges of studying multimodal interaction, and I wish to share some of them here.

My analysis has revealed that the participants employed various communicative resources for achieving a successful completion of the service encounter. While such observations confirm the significance of multimodal analysis, we should also take the next step in studying multimodal interactions by looking at how talk and action are integrated in social interaction. My analysis of the service-assessment sequence has revealed that there is no rigidly fixed relationship between talk and action, but rather,

people *manipulate* this relationship on a moment-by-moment basis. It is by observing how the participants *coordinate* talk and action that we find their professionalism — as hairdresser or client.

Such an approach to studying multimodal interaction may be less applicable in situations where the service provided is measured in more clear-cut ways; a more straightforward, quantified service can be assessed by a clear measure of whether something now works or not (e.g., car or other mechanical repair.). However, it is applicable to a range of professional-client interactions where people evaluate the quality of the service with their subjective perspectives, such as various beautification services in the design field, boutique stores, or even sit-down restaurants. Studying how their service-assessment sequences are organized via the coordination of talk and physical activity will enhance our understanding of negotiation-in-interaction in the workplace and what it means to professionalize communication in such situations.

The present study has a bearing on how we organize everyday interactions as well. We often carry out conversations with friends and family while conducting everyday physical activities, e.g., shopping, driving, eating/drinking, and cooking. By pursuing how talk and physical activity are brought into alignment, we work toward a holistic understanding of how people dramatize their everyday work and relevant identities in social interaction.

Nevertheless, we still have one last question remained about dramatization and professionalization. Does professional work of consensus actually improve service, or is it a symbolic “dressing up” of service? Is it professionalized, or ritualized?

8.5 THE RITUAL OF BEAUTY SALON INTERACTIONS

When people are sophisticated in their communication skills, the boundary between physical task and communication work may become indistinct. Goffman (1959) explains the dichotomy between practical matters and communication skills by referring to “the dilemma of expression *versus* action” (p. 33). Here, what he means by “expression” is the way we dramatize our work. Thus – he continues, using Sartre’s example – when a student concentrates on dramatizing his work as an attentive student, he may end up exhausting his energy and time for enacting the role through nonverbal behavior (i.e., expression) and may not be able to actually listen to the lecture (i.e., action) (p. 33). Likewise, we have seen that the physical inspection has been dramatized, highly interactive, and public. But is physical inspection really *the* action in the service-assessment sequence? That is, did the participants engage in the action to *really* find out about the haircut, or was physical inspection a ritual?

To refer back to the examples of Japanese service-assessment sequences, the participants coordinated their talk and physical inspection so that the sequence ends with a series of synchronized behavior. In fact, when the participants failed in achieving this, the customer re-completed a sequence and created another opportunity to synchronize their head nods. So, what exactly is *the* action here? It seems that the ultimate action *is* expression: the expression of “synchronized minds.” Accordingly, what they regard as “success” is found in their elucidation of matched feelings, rather than the negotiation of the quality of a service *per se*. Compared to Japanese service-assessment sequences, the ones in the U.S. seemed to be more catered to the actual examination of the work provided, as the customers are given their own hand-held mirror to conduct the evaluation. Still, the physical inspection here is not private work. The process is supervised by stylists who stand nearby, occasionally turning the chair according with the

progression of the session. Under such circumstance, it is not surprising to see that customers may be more occupied with dramatization of the action than the actual physical inspection.

Eventually, the professionalization of communication may guarantee a successful outcome in that the service-assessment sequence is smoothly conducted and completed in consensus. However, we must be aware of what we are agreeing on. In my study, all the stylists and customers left each other in a state of consensus, but were they really consenting on the quality of the haircut, or was this just a beauty salon ritual? For the stylists to aim for a high number of repeat customers, and for the customers to stop complaining about bad haircuts, then, it is important to keep these questions in mind and to search for an *enduring* consensus. Only then would the beauty of consensus rise above the allure of a peaceful haircutting sessions, bringing us closer to haircutting nirvana.

Appendix: Transcription Conventions

Symbols Used in Original Line

The glossary of transcript symbols given below have been adopted from the descriptions by Ten provided Have (1999, p. 213-4).

[<i>A single left bracket</i> indicates the point of overlap onset.
=	<i>Equal signs</i> , one at the end of one line and one at the beginning of a next, indicate no ‘gap’ between the two lines. This is often called <i>latching</i> .
(0.0)	<i>Numbers in parentheses</i> indicate elapsed time in silence by tenth of seconds, so (7.1) is a pause of 7 seconds and one tenth of a second.
(.)	<i>A dot in parentheses</i> indicates a tiny ‘gap’ within or between utterances.
<u>word</u>	<i>Underscoring</i> indicates some form of stress, via pitch and/or amplitude.
::	<i>Colons</i> indicate prolongation of the immediately prior sound. Multiple colons indicate a more prolonged sound.
-	<i>A dash</i> indicates a cut-off.
.	<i>A period</i> indicates a stopping fall in tone.
,	<i>A comma</i> indicates a continuing intonation, like when you are reading items from a list.
?	<i>A question mark</i> indicates a rising intonation.
↑↓	<i>Arrows</i> indicate marked shifts into higher or lower pitch in the utterance-part immediately following the arrow.
WORD	<i>Upper case</i> indicates especially loud sounds relative to the surrounding talk.
°	Utterances or utterance parts bracketed by <i>degree signs</i> are relatively

	quieter than the surrounding talk.
< >	<i>Right/left carets</i> bracketing an utterance or utterance-part indicate speeding up.
w(h)ord	A parenthesized <i>h</i> , or a <i>row of hs within a word</i> , indicates breathiness, as in laughter, crying, etc.
()	<i>Empty parentheses</i> indicate the transcriber's inability to hear what was said. The length of the parenthesized space indicates the length of the untranscribed talk. In the speaker designation column, the empty parentheses indicate inability to identify a speaker.
(word)	<i>Parenthesized words</i> are especially dubious hearings or speaker identifications.
(())	<i>Double parentheses</i> contain transcriber's descriptions rather than, or in addition to, transcriptions.

Abbreviations in the Interlinear Gloss

The following abbreviations were used for transcripts of Japanese data, and have been adopted from Ikeda (2007).

CP	various forms of copula verb <i>be</i>
EMP	emphatic marker
FP	final particle
LK	nominal linker
N	nominalizer
Neg	negative morpheme

O	object particle
P	particle (other)
Pass	passive
Q	question particle
QT	quotative particle
SB	subjective particle
Tag	tag question-like expression
TP	topic particle

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